

**Henderson County
TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
October 19, 2022**

The Transportation Advisory Committee held a regularly scheduled meeting on October 19, 2022, at 4:00 p.m. in the King Street Meeting Room and online via Microsoft Teams.

Voting Member	Present	Not in Attendance
Beau Waddell, Chair at-large	√	
Joe Sanders, Vice-Chair at-large	√	
Sam Henderson, at-large	√	
Jay Egolf, at-large		√
Rebecca McCall, Henderson County	√	
Bill Lapsley, Henderson County		√
Jennifer Hensley, City of Hendersonville	√	
Anne Coletta, Village of Flat Rock	√	
Shanon Gonce, Town of Mills River	√	
Bob Davy, Town of Fletcher	√	
George Banta, Town of Laurel Park	√	

Also present: Janna Bianculli, Senior Planner; Autumn Radcliff, Planning Director; Christopher Todd, Business and Community Development Director; Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO; Lonnie Watkins, NCDOT; and Chuck McGrady, NCDOT BOT

Public Comment:

Ward Seguin gave comment regarding the Duke Energy EV Charger Prep Credit program, which offers rebates up to \$1,133 for electric vehicle owners. The grant covers electrical upgrades and preparation for an EV charger; however, it does not include the charger itself.

Approval of Agenda and Minutes:

Councilman Shanon Gonce moved to approve the meeting agenda and the September meeting minutes. Councilwoman Anne Coletta seconded the motion. Motion carried.

Discussion:

2045 Comprehensive Plan

Janna Bianculli, Senior Planner, gave a presentation on the 2045 Comprehensive Plan. Mrs. Bianculli informed the committee that Planning staff conducted ten open houses, held over 45 stakeholder conversations, five public input meetings, seven steering committee meetings, and received over 7,200 survey responses. Mrs. Bianculli then provided an overview of the 2045 Comprehensive Plan layout and transportation-specific goals, recommendations, and action steps. The committee was shown three key transportation recommendations to share their thoughts on. Tristan Winkler, FBRMPO, noted that the MPO is not responsible for the CTP, and is actually an NCDOT responsibility. Mr. Winkler also noted that the new Complete Streets policy applies to projects that have not had a complete environmental document. For projects that already have a complete environmental document, the old Complete Streets policy still applies. The committee discussed the possibility of bicycle routes to commercial developments that are located along the Ecusta Trail. Sam Henderson, member at-large, noted the need for adequate bicycle parking and paths along the Ecusta Trail, in relation to adjacent commercial developments. Commissioner Rebecca McCall noted that there is a hope that businesses along the Ecusta Trail will open their parking and restrooms to trail-users. Councilman Bob Davy pointed out the possibility of providing guidelines to businesses that volunteer to participate in the Ecusta Trail. Chuck McGrady, NCDOT, thanked Mrs. Radcliff and Mrs. Bianculli for their transparency throughout the planning process.

Express Design for Hwy 191

Tristan Winkler gave a presentation on the potential Express Design for project R-2588A. The R-2588A project is a planned improvement project on highway NC 191. Mr. Winkler informed the committee that an Express Design is a mock-up of what a project could potentially look like, to assist NCDOT in determining better cost estimates. R-2588A was automatically submitted into the prioritization process because it is considered a sibling project to R-2588B (widening of NC 191 from NC 280 to Mountain Rd, already funded and planned). Mr. Winkler asked the committee if they would want NCDOT to create an Express Design for NC 191. Mr. Winkler noted that this specific project has not received the best responses during public engagement efforts. He also noted that there is no commitment to go through with a project if an Express Design is created. Public comment is also not generally apart of the Express Design process. Councilwoman Jennifer Hensley stated that she would feel more comfortable moving forward after speaking to her Board, since the majority of the project is within the city limits. Mr. Winkler noted that there is an expected 25% increase in traffic, between 12,000 and 13,000 AADT, by 2045. The committee decided to table the discussion for a future meeting.

Updates:

NCDOT Update

Mr. Lonnie Watkins gave updates on NCDOT projects in construction and in development.

Construction

- Green River Bridge – Continuing to work on superstructure underneath existing bridge. Continuing to work on the middle section of the bridge.
- I-26 – Currently approximately 60% complete and still on schedule.
- Clear Creek Bridge – East Bound traffic is being shifted to newly constructed lanes so permanent lanes can be built. West Bound traffic should be shifted in mid-November.
- Commercial Boulevard Extension – Continuing site cleanup. A driveway still needs to be installed.
- I-26 Drainage Saluda Grade – Plumbers completed boring and pipe installation underneath I-26. Now focusing on drainage pipes between Howard Gap Rd and I-26. Also currently seeking funding to repair Howard Gap Rd itself.
- US-25 Sinkhole – East side is complete. Currently working closer to the main line of US 25. Starting October 31st, when traveling Westbound on I-26, the exit ramp onto US 25 South will be closed for approximately 20 days.
- King Street Resurfacing – Still on schedule for resurfacing. Already under contract with a completion date of October 2023.

Development

- US-64 – Continuing working with utilities.
- Main Street at Highschool – Continuing working on Right of Way. Construction is set to begin next summer.
- White Street – Finalizing Right of Way plans, should be completed by October 21st. Survey crews to be working in February/March to survey ROW line(s) and easement line(s). All property owners will receive a notice letter regarding surveying.
- R-2588B – Still in Right of Way acquisition process and preparing permit package. Working with AT&T to determine locations of switch stations.
- Sidewalk Multiuse Paths – Mills River, feasibility study is complete and being reviewed by NCDOT; Hendersonville S. Grove St and Blythe St, cost estimate and feasibility study is complete and currently pursuing funding to match.

Village of Flat Rock

Vice Mayor Anne Coletta shared that they are looking to upgrade at least one of two Electric Vehicle chargers to a Fast Charger. Flat Rock is currently seeking grants/funding for the project.

Henderson County

Commissioner McCall shared that the County is currently pursuing the purchase of property for a sports complex, which will begin with the relocation of current soccer fields. One of the three potential properties could have a possible connection to the Oklawaha Trail. Commissioner McCall suggested to look into safety concerns and improvements on a one-lane bridge on New Hope Rd.

Town of Laurel Park

Councilman George Banta shared that Laurel Park is starting work to curb stormwater runoff and culvert replacement before starting a major paving project in the spring.

City of Hendersonville

Councilwoman Jennifer Hensley shared that the owner of 5 Points Diner has concerns regarding potential impacts of the future left-turn off N. Main Street, into the High School. Mr. Watkins addressed noted that NCDOT is in communication with the owner regarding the project.

Town of Mills River

Councilman Shanon Gonce thanked NCDOT for their work on their roadways.

Town of Fletcher

Councilman Bob Davy shared that the developer for their proposed downtown project has pulled out of the process due to requirements set out by NCDOT.

At-large/Staff Updates

Sam Henderson, at-large, expressed concerns over the ongoing traffic and number of car accidents on I-26. Lonnie Watkins noted that NCDOT has access to accident and traffic data and there has not been a significant increase in accidents since the start of construction. Mrs. Radcliff also noted that NCDOT has been very responsive to safety concerns on I-26.

“Thank you” Celebration for Lonnie

Lonnie Watkins is retiring from NCDOT at the end of the month (October 2022). Staff and committee members expressed their gratitude for his service to the County.

Next Meeting:

The next TAC meeting is scheduled for January 18th, 2022. **November meeting is cancelled**

The meeting adjourned at 5:36 PM.

Beau Waddell, Chair
Henderson County Transportation Advisory Committee