

Meeting Agenda

RPO Technical Advisory Committee
September 23rd, 2021 –11:30

JOIN Zoom Meeting or Call in: (301) 715 8592

1. **WELCOME AND HOUSEKEEPING**

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| A. Welcome and Introductions | Matt Wechtel |
| B. Ethics Statement | Matt Wechtel |

2. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

3. **Consent Agenda**

- | | |
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| Minutes from the RPO TAC June 24th, 2021, Meeting Agenda Approval/Modifications | Matt Wechtel |
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4. **LAND OF SKY RPO TAC BUSINESS Items**

- | | |
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| A Rural FTA 5310 Letters of Support | Vicki Eastland |
| B. NCDOT STIP Program Update | Wanda Austin, PE |
| C. NCDOT Value Assessment/Cost Containment Initiative | Hannah Cook, PE |

5. **PUBLIC COMMENT**

6. **REGULAR UPDATES**

- | | |
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| A. NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates Most Recent Updates http://landofskyrpo.org/ | Mark Gibbs/Wanda Austin (or designee) |
| B. NCDOT Transportation Planning Division | Daniel Sellers, PE |
| C. Staff Updates and Housekeeping | Vicki Eastland |

7. **ADJOURN LOSRPO MEETING**

Matt Wechtel

Upcoming Meeting

Land of Sky RPO TCC – Meeting on October 14th, 2021 – 10:00 AM Land of Sky Regional Council and Zoom

Land of Sky RPO TAC – Meeting on October 28th, 2021 – 11:30 AM Land of Sky Regional Council and Zoom

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Item 1B: Ethics Statement

ETHICS AWARENESS & CONFLICT OF INTEREST REMINDER

(To be read by the Chair or his or her designee at the beginning of each meeting)

In accordance with the State Government Ethics Act, it is the duty of every Board member to avoid conflicts of interest. Does any Board member have any known conflict of interest with respect to any matters coming before the Board today? If so, please identify the conflict and refrain from any participation in the particular matter involved.

Land of Sky Rural Planning Organization
Technical Advisory Committee
Virtual Meeting via the Zoom Platform
Minutes – June 24, 2021

Attendees:

| | |
|--|--|
| Chair Matt Wechtel (Madison Commission) | Vicki Eastland (RPO Coordinator) |
| Zia Rifkin (minutes) | Steve Williams (NCDOT Division 14) |
| Troy Wilson (NCDOT Division 14) Commission) | Larry Chapman (Transylvania) |
| Stephen Sparks (NCDOT Division 13) | Allen McNeil (Transylvania County) |
| Nancy Allen (Town of Marshall) | Marshall Williams |
| Maureen Copelof (City of Brevard) | Kevin Ensley (Haywood Commission) |
| Wanda Austin (NCDOT Division 14) | Wesley Grindstaff (NCDOT Div14 Maint.) |
| Hannah Cook (NCDOT Division 13) | |

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WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chair Matt Wechtel called the meeting to order at approximately 11:30am and welcomed attendees. He read the Ethics Statement, and inquired if there were any conflicts, which could preclude TAC members from participating in and voting on any business items, to state such for the record, and to refrain from participation in the matter.

Vicki Eastland called the roll and quorum was announced.

Chair Wechtel requested approval of the consent agenda, which included the June 24, 2021, minutes, and the agenda.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

APPROVAL OF CONSENT AGENDA

Nancy Allen moved to approve the consent agenda consisting of the minutes of the May 27, 2021, meeting, and the current agenda. Larry Chapman seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

BUSINESS

LOSRPO Draft P6.0 Local Input Point Methodology

The NCDOT Strategic Planning Office of Transportation (SPOT) has been tasked with evaluating and programming transportation projects as stipulated in the Strategic Transportation Investments (STI) legislation, enacted on June 26, 2013. As part of STI, each MPO/RPO and NCDOT Division Office may assign local points to projects in the Regional Impact and Division Needs categories, but not the Statewide Mobility category.

NCDOT requires that the methodology include the following components:

- At least two criteria (with at least one being qualitative)
- Public involvement (on the proposed methodology, and the preliminary assignment of local input points to projects based on the approved methodology)
- Dissemination of methodology, local points, and public input on LOSRPO's website (www.landofskyrpo.org)



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Land of Sky RPO's Draft Local Input Point Assignment Methodology was sent to NCDOT SPOT office for review. Minor edit requests were received and those have been incorporated in the DRAFT document. The requests were for spacing and removal of an extra parenthesis, an extra # symbol and to on page 5, in the FLEX policy to change RPO's to organizations; otherwise, the methodology was approved by NCDOT. The DRAFT Methodology was advertised in the Mountain Express for public comment. No comments have been received. The TCC recommends the draft methodology to the TAC for final approval at today's meeting.

The tables below demonstrate the criteria that Land of Sky RPO plans to use to assign Local Input Points in SPOT 6.0.

| Regional Impact Scoring | | |
|-------------------------|---------------------|--|
| Criteria | Max. Score Possible | Scoring Methodology |
| SPOT Quantitative Score | 50 | Actual SPOT quantitative score from NCDOT (P6.0 regional scores on a 70-point scale, final results multiplied by 0.7143 to convert them to a 50-point scale) |
| County Ranking | 50 | #1 Priority = 50 points #2 Priority = 45 points #3 Priority = 40 points #4 Priority = 35 points #5 Priority = 30 points #6 Priority = 25 points #7 Priority = 20 points #8 Priority = 15 points #9 Priority = 10 points #10 Priority = 5 points |
| Total | 100 | |



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| Total | 100 | |

The entire document can be viewed on the LOSRPO website.

[LOSRPO DRAFT P6.0 Local input Methodology](#)

PUBLIC HEARING

Matt Wechtel opened and closed the public hearing, where no public comments were received.

Kevin Ensley moved to approve that the Draft P6.0 Local Input Point (LIP) Methodology as presented. Maureen Copelof seconded, and the motion carried upon a roll call vote, and without further discussion.

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Overview of NCDOT Division 14 Maintenance:

Wesley Grindstaff, PE, NCDOT Division 14 Maintenance Engineer provided an overview of Division 14 Maintenance Division and operations.

Explanation was provided regarding NCDOT sub-units including the Bridge Maintenance Unit, which is responsible for the many aspects of bridge maintenance. Traffic Services and Engineering sub-unit fulfills some maintenance functions including traffic signal installation and maintenance, sign installation and maintenance, pavement markings and markers, specialty marking, IMAP, capacity and Impact analysis, speed limit and crash analysis, among other duties.

The Roadside Environmental Unit provides roadside shoulder mowing, contour slope mowing, herbicide applications, rest area operations, contract litter removal, wildflower and daylily programs and selective vegetation removal permits. Many of the roadside maintenance operations are performed by contractors. NCDOT provides the herbicide applications in-house.

The Bituminous Unit provides chip-seal operations, fog seals, the resurfacing program and pavement design throughout the State. This unit provides in-house services in the far western-most counties and is based in Graham County. In other areas, contractors are used to provide these services.

The final Division 14 maintenance operation unit reviewed was the Equipment Unit, which provides equipment support, fleet purchasing and repairs/upkeep. This unit is headquartered in Sylva, but there are maintenance yards in all 10 counties. Lastly, Wesley Grindstaff provided a listing of the maintenance contacts throughout the Division.

Discussion occurred regarding the kudzu issue around area roadways, and it was shared that the Roadside Environmental Unit's herbicide/eradication program is responsible for dealing with the NCDOT areas infested with kudzu. Unfortunately, the kudzu must leaf-out for the herbicides to be effective and those cannot be used on private property along roadways.

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Discussion occurred regarding a road in Division 13, which was recently resurfaced and the arrows that have been painted on the road are over rumble strips. Wesley shared that specialty markings must be especially durable and that may feel like rumble strips.

Information only. No action requested.

PUBLIC COMMENT

No public comments were made.

REGULAR UPDATES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

NCDOT Division 13 & 14 Construction/Project Updates (Hannah Cook- Div. 13 and Steve Williams- Div. 14)

Staff Updates (Vicki Eastland)

ADJOURNMENT

Kevin Ensley moved to adjourn the meeting. Matt Wechtel seconded, and the meeting adjourned at 12:28 pm.

4. LAND OF SKY RPO TAC BUSINESS

Rural Transit Providers FTA 5310 Elderly and Persons Living w/ Disabilities Application & RPO Letters of Support

NCDOT Public Transit Division (PTD) requires public transit providers to reach out to their MPO/RPO planning partners for letters of support for their applications for Federal Transit Agency (FTA) Section 5310 funds. The (FTA) **Section 5310 Enhanced Mobility for seniors and Individuals with Disabilities** provides funds for programs and projects that aim to improve mobility for seniors and individuals with disabilities by removing barriers to transportation services and expanding mobility options.

There is no action required today, this is just a reminder that LOSRPO will provide the transit systems and any other eligible applicant, i.e., the Land of Sky Senior Companion Program, with letters of support.

Information only no action requested

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Item 4B NCDOT STIP Program Update

Prioritization or SPOT is the process used to determine what projects from long-range plans will be moved to the State Transportation Improvement Program, the STIP. The process is governed by the Strategic Transportation Investments Act of 2012 (STI).

The State Prioritization workgroup at their July meeting reached a consensus that new projects would not be programmed through the current ongoing round of Prioritization SPOT 6.0 or P6.0 due to limited funding projected to be available in the 2024-2033 timeframe. The lack of projected available funding is largely due to cost increases of transportation projects committed in the STIP.

Basically, this means that P6.0 is being halted. The SPOT office will release the Quantitative Scores of projects submitted in P6.0 to help evaluate criteria and weights but no Local Input Points will be applied.

While there will be no new projects programmed from P6.0, the state is required to develop a new STIP. The State Prioritization workgroup will continue to meet and help to determine the process used to develop the STIP. These could include changes in schedule or phasing of committed projects, as well as other considerations.

Wanda Austin, PE, NCDOT Division 14 Division Engineer will provide an update on the NCDOT STIP Program.

Information only no action requested

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STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

J. ERIC BOYETTE
SECRETARY

August 18, 2021

MEMO TO: MPOs, RPOs, NCDOT Division Planning staff

FROM: Van Argabright, PE
Director, Division of Planning & Programming *Van*

SUBJECT: Prioritization 6.0 (P6) Schedule Halted

The P6 Workgroup met in July 2021 to review the latest update on funding availability for new projects resulting from P6 scoring. Bottom line is that low initial cost estimates coupled with rising right of way, utilities, and construction costs have caused the outlook for programming the future 2024-2033 STIP to be a major concern. When considering just currently committed projects, little to no funding will be available for programming of new P6 project submittals. The Workgroup reached consensus that moving forward with P6 local input points does not seem appropriate and recommended to the NC Board of Transportation that the remainder of P6 be halted. **SPOT shared this recommendation with the NCDOT BOT on August 4th and the Board Members concurred.**

The SPOT Office continues to finalize quantitative scores for P6 project submittals and intend to release this information in September 2021. The Workgroup continues to meet with NCDOT STIP staff on determining a solution to balance and schedule the future 2024-2033 STIP using a subset of existing projects from the currently adopted 2020-2029 STIP. The plan will be to present the draft 2024-2033 STIP to the Board of Transportation in the Fall of 2022.

If you have any questions, please contact me or Jason Schronce (SPOT Manager) via email to discuss. Thank you.

cc: Ronnie Keeter, Chief Engineer
Chris Peoples, Deputy Chief Engineer
Greg Burns, Eastern Deputy Chief Engineer
Brian Burch, Western Deputy Chief Engineer
Joey Hopkins, Planning Deputy Chief Engineer
Division Engineers
Lamar Sylvester, Director of Field Support
Christopher Werner, Director of Technical Services
Edward Parker, Assistant Division Administrator, FHWA – NC Division
George Hoops, Planning & Program Development Leader, FHWA – NC Division

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RALEIGH, NC 27601

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Item 4C NCDOT Value Assessment/Cost Containment Initiative

With cost estimates and project costs continuing to increase. NCDOT has implemented a Value Assessment Initiative to reduce project costs by 10%. Each Project Team will consider Cost Containment measures to reduce the Construction and long-term Maintenance costs for a project in Development. These costs may include direct Construction costs, Right of Way costs, and Utility relocation costs. Cost Containment is important to ensure NCDOT is fiscally responsible and better meet programming goals for the benefit of North Carolina.

Hannah Cook, PE, Division 13 Planning Engineer will provide an overview of the Value Assessment/Cost Containment Initiative.

Information only no action requested

Public Comment

6. REGULAR UPDATES

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|--|----------------|
| A. NCDOT Division 13 and 14 updates Most Recent Updates http://landofskyrpo.org/ | NCDOT Staff |
| B. Staff Updates | Vicki Eastland |
| c. Transportation Planning Division updates | Daniel Sellers |

ANNOUNCEMENTS, NEWS, SPECIAL UPDATES

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|--------------------------------------|--------------|
| 7. <u>ADJOURN LOSRPO TAC MEETING</u> | Matt Wechtel |
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Upcoming Meetings

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