

Moore County CTP Presentation
Moore County Transportation Committee Meeting Minutes
May 25, 2011, 10:00 AM

Attendees Present:

Scott W. Walston, PE	NCDOT - TPB
Frances D. Bisby, EI	NCDOT - TPB
Brendan Merithew	NCDOT – TPB
Tim Johnson	NCDOT – Division 8
Chuck Dumas, PE	NCDOT – District 2
Matt Day, AICP	Triangle J Council of Governments, Triangle Area RPO
Joey Raczkowski, AICP	Moore County, Planning and Community Development
Debra Ensminger, CZO	Moore County, Planning and Community Development
Jeremy Rust	Moore County, Planning and Community Development

Jimmy Melton	Moore County
Kathy Liles	Aberdeen
Carol Sparks	Carthage
Kathy Blake	Southern Pines
Steve Debolt	Whispering Pines
Pat Ann McMurray	Aberdeen
Carol Lucas	Cameron
Sharyl Carter	Whispering Pines
Fred Monroe	Southern Pines
Earl Ingram	Pinehurst
Harry Huberth	Southern Pines
Hu Poston	Vass
Joan Thurman	Pinehurst
Andrea Correll	Pinehurst
Virginia Fallon	Pinehurst
David Wilson	West End
Pamela Graham	Southern Pines/Aberdeen
Ralph Harris	Aberdeen
Tom Campbell	Pinehurst
Monita McLaurin	Division of Community Planning (Speaker)
Jeff Burdick	Division of Community Planning
Steven Later	Southern Pines
Roberto Miquel	Raleigh (Speaker)
Karen O'Hara	Carthage
Landon Russell	Southern Pines
Artie Barber	Carthage
John R. Cashion	Pinehurst
Robert McVay	Pinehurst
Percy Bennett	Pinehurst
Richard Moore	Southern Pines

Gary Briggs	Cameron
Dick Bisbe	Pinehurst
William Wendt	Pinehurst
George Erickson	Foxfire Village

Introductions: Mr. Jimmy Melton, Moore County Commissioner, opened the meeting with a brief salutation and introduced Frances Bisby as the day's speaker. The Triangle Area Rural Planning Organization's (TARPO's) new senior planner, Matt Day, was also introduced as an experienced planning partner for the CTP study and charrette process.

Presentation: The presentation topics included a brief synopsis of the Moore County CTP process as well as progress since the last meeting on December 6, 2010:

- **Staff Role Changes**
 - TARPO Planner, Lost one, Found one!
 - Moore County Project Liaison Changed
- **Fact and Resource Findings**
 - Project Development and Environmental Analysis (PDEA)
 - Rail Division and Cheryl Hannah
 - NCDOT Feasibility Unit (West End and Cameron)
 - Researching Impacts of Proposed TIP Projects
 - Building Fort Bragg and BRAC Relationships
 - Meeting with Local Planners (on going)
- **Development of Materials**
 - Engaged Roadway Design Unit to Create US 1 Visualization
 - New Approach to Charrette mapping
 - Collection of local data and planning elements
- **Responding to Public Comment**
 - Letter to and from Secretary Conti
 - Emails to and from citizens
 - Concerned citizen visited the office
 - Feedback from planning level staff
- **Rethinking Process, Materials, and Schedules**
 - Look to the website for information:
<http://www.ncdot.org/doh/preconstruct/tpb/PLANNING/mooreco.html>
 - A tentative schedule was proposed that set an aggressive pace and the question was asked by NCDOT if this was possible from the local perspective.
 - Review of CTP Defining Information:
What is a CTP? Long Range Planning, Ten Year Work Program, Five Year Work Program; Typical Stages of NCDOT Project Development; The CTP in Regards to Federal and State Legislation; The CTP and the Importance of Land Use Planning; the CTP and the Prioritization Process; CTP and Right-of-Way Preservation; The CTP and Strategic Highway Corridors (SHC); Freeway and Expressway Criteria; Summary of Important Points.

- Feedback from December 6th Meeting:
Many things to improve upon: facility, mapping, needed more staff at each of the stations,

Focus Areas:

Following the review of Pre-CTP progress, the meeting concentrated on the focus areas: Cameron, West End, Carthage, Western Connector, and US 1. The information, issues and concerns of each focus area were highlighted and two guest speakers were presented for contributing information about focus area details. Monita McLaurin, Chief Planner Division of Community Planning/Department of Commerce, spoke to smaller communities faced with the need for a bypass. Roberto Miquel, with Wilbur Smith and Associates, who was responsible for the development of the BRAC Travel Demand Model, spoke to the results of his study in regards to Moore County facility deficiencies and the projected growth in Moore County along US 1 and NC 5. The details given for the focus areas were as follows:

Cameron

R-2529 is part of the Strategic Highway Corridor #25 which is NC 24/27 and improvements are currently shown on existing location. When NCDOT begins looking at long range planning, some projects like this one are defined by a statewide plan. So, initial effort to show need begins with proposing improvements on a facility's existing location. For Cameron, this does not seem to be a feasible route for NC 24/27 due to right-of-way constraints and the built environment. We may need to have our Cameron representative, Mr. Campbell, confer with the other Cameron stakeholders to decide how they would like to proceed and if we need to add a charrette and focus area for Cameron.

Problem: Currently, NC 24/27 in compliance with the SHC Vision Plan shows R-2529 as an expressway with improvements on existing location through the center of Cameron. Right of way is limited and the improvement would impose significant impacts along existing NC 24-27. *NCDOT needs Cameron's assistance in locating and protecting a corridor for an NC 24-27 Expressway to provide continuity and compliance with the SHC Vision Plan.*

Key Points:

1. R-2528, R-2212, R-2529 are the three STIP projects that define Strategic Highway Corridor #25 in Moore County.
2. Feasibility of imposing such extensive impacts on current location warrants examination of existing geometric constraints of improvements to existing facility.
3. Does using the existing corridor fit the local vision? What is plan B?

West End

West End poses a similar situation without the constraints of the strategic highway corridor. There are four significant projects proposed that intersect with the West End community. Here, it may be possible to reduce the cross section depending on travel demand model and analysis of projected growth and traffic.

Problem: Assuming the completion of four significant transportation projects: R-2807 (Re-alignment of NC 73 intersection at NC 211), R-2812 (NC 211 widening), R-2591 NC 211 Bypass (Western Connector) and locally requested project widening NC 73; significant impacts to the built environment in the central core of the West End community would be imposed. The local identity and appearance of the community would likely be very different after the proposed projects were completed.

Key Points:

4. There are four major transportation projects planned within close proximity of this community.
5. Right-of-way is limited through the business district along NC 24/27 of the West End community.
6. What is the community's vision?
7. Is land use planning and revitalization a goal?
8. In order to best serve travelers from West End, where does the Western Connector/ NC 211 bypass need to connect near West End? And near Aberdeen and Southern Pines?
9. Are there steps that need to be taken to re-configure how these projects interrelate near West End?

Carthage

Like Cameron, the urban core is centered along the strategic highway corridor #25 and the TIP project designated to address the facility compliance is R-2212. This project had progressed up to the acquisition of right-of-way before it was deferred. All work has ceased and it will have to start over in the prioritization process. Concerns have been expressed by citizenry that a bypass alternative would be detrimental to the economic prosperity of the business district along NC 24/27. NCDOT stressed the differences between a single TIP project and a Comprehensive Plan:

- STIP projects usually address one primary deficiency.
- A CTP addresses a community's quality of life, economic growth and development, and its connectivity to neighbors, nearby communities and beyond the boundaries of the county.
- STIP projects attempt to correct only one purpose and need.
- A CTP, in addition, also addresses the cohesion of a community and the needs of local residents to reach their destinations.

Monita McLaurin was the guest speaker invited to address local concerns. Ms. McLaurin made available a list of funding resources and options which could be used to assist local communities with revitalization efforts. The integration of land use planning and a CTP results in the provision of supportive infrastructure that improves a community's quality of life and successful revitalization efforts.

Key Points

10. R-2528, R-2212, R-2529 are the three STIP projects that define Strategic Highway Corridor #25 in Moore County.
11. R-2212 has been deferred, but R-2528 and R-2529 are still viable projects. Neither is funded for construction. Both have made it to Right-of-Way. (R-2528 ~Carthage and R-2212~R-2529)
12. Both R-2528 and R-2529 are scheduled as Expressways. Both projects are proposed as 4 lane divided highways with a 46' median, proposed with 60 MPH speed limit and a 200'-250' proposed Right-of-Way.
13. Expressways have interchanges for major streets and at-grade intersections for minor side streets, no traffic signals, driveways are right-in, right-out only. Minor side streets may become right-in, right-out only.
14. Growing traffic volumes on NC 24-27 is reducing level of service of the facility in the vicinity of Carthage.
15. High truck volumes in the downtown area contribute excessive noise and trucks have difficulty negotiating the courthouse traffic circle.
16. There is significant pedestrian volume in the vicinity of the circle.
17. Military utilizes NC 24-27 heavily as it connects three primary bases: Lejeune, Pope and Bragg.
18. Provides connectivity to Interstate System: I-40 and I-73.

19. Protection of mobility and connectivity of the NC 24/27 corridor as part of the Strategic Highway Corridor Vision and the North Carolina Intrastate System is a priority for the state.
20. Does using the existing location fit the local Vision?

If corridor preservation goes unaddressed, where will the future facility be located when over-riding factors like safety, the SHC Vision Plan, mobility, national defense or congestion make the decision?

Not preserving a corridor will mean more impacts, higher cost, fewer choices, and years of delay in providing residents with needed facilities.

The Western Connector and US 1

The Western Connector and US 1 are both focus areas that have been impacted by regional growth. Although, US 1 is a SHC and should consider a bypass alternative due to impacts to area of using the existing corridor, sections of existing US 1 have reached traffic volumes that are fast approaching the need for freeway facility specifically where US 15/501 and NC 211 intersect with US 1 near Aberdeen. Roberto Miquel who is a planner for Wilbur Smith, has spent the last two years developing a regional travel demand model for BRAC that looks at the anticipated needs based on the growth from the base re-alignment at Fort Bragg.

Mr. Miquel shared with the MCTC the background and results of the BRAC study: BRAC RTF Sub-Area Model in respect to Moore County. The model was developed to analyze future travel demand in the region surrounding Fort Bragg and to provide insight as to the transportation needs in the region. Needs were identified by Level of Service E or worse, assessed for regional significance, and corridors identified to help mitigate these deficiencies.

The two corridors that were of regional significance in Moore County included the following:

US 1

- Daily volumes expected to reach 57,000 vehicles per day by 2035 between Southern Pines and Aberdeen
- Current facility will be unable to handle this traffic
- Existing facility will need to be upgraded to a freeway or a by-pass will need to be built to accommodate the increase in traffic

NC 5

- Daily volumes expected to reach 27,000 vehicles per day by 2035 through Pinehurst
- Current facility will be unable to handle this traffic
- Existing facility will need to be widened or a by-pass will need to be built to accommodate the increase in traffic

Break in Program with “What Does NCDOT Need to Know?”

As a break in the activities, NCDOT staff led a Fact Finding Session in which attendees were asked to provide comments and concerns. Comments from this meeting are intended for use in providing responses for the upcoming sub-committee and charrette meetings:

Cameron Focus Area Comments:

No Comments at this time

West End

1. Started fighting against the bypass in 1989 (211 bypass/connector). There was a feasibility study done in 1990, and this is the same fight over again. In the past, local residents sent over 1,000 letters against the project. Nobody wants the project – they should just use the existing roads. The alignment shown would cross through his family’s property (cultivated as a natural pine forest) – NC State and Duke Forestry experts were involved in re-establishing this area of forest, and it represents a large area of natural long-leaf pine landscape. Additionally, there has been increased woodpecker activity on the property (including several new locations just found). Comment was from David Wilson.

Carthage

1. The main issue that met with objection to R-2212 was in the Needmore neighborhood. The project cut off First Baptist Church from its community.
2. The town does not want widening improvements through the center of town.
3. Need to consider evening meetings in the future, as many people were not able to attend a daytime meeting.

Western Connector/ NC 211 Bypass

1. The previous comment about West End also applies to the Western Connector.
2. Earl Ingram owns property near “Area A” and is against new roads through undeveloped areas, as this just opens these areas up to development. He is also against large new developments. The Stone Hill development at Hoffman and Foxfire Roads will increase traffic on those roads, which will then have a spillover effect back into Pinehurst. He is against the “Pinehurst Bypass” because it will only generate more development, creating more traffic, which will spill back into Pinehurst Village, defeating its whole purpose. Local roads should be improved instead, including Foxfire and Hoffman, especially since these will be necessary anyway with new development occurring in that area. The forest land should not be developed, and it is important to maintain the beauty and natural resources of the area.
3. George Erickson, mayor of Foxfire Village – In 2009, Foxfire started a 20-year agreement with Stone Hill regarding voluntary annexation of about 1500 acres.

Later, another 400-acre property nearby also asked for annexation. The alignment as currently shown on the maps would pass through these newly annexed areas, and the village would now be opposed to that.

4. Not everyone is against this project. Pinehurst is growing and needs a way to address its traffic. Do not force the abolition of the traffic circle – it is a beautiful entrance feature, not just to Pinehurst, but to all communities in the county. The current project on NC 211 needs to be finished and present a beautiful image for the US Open in 2014.
5. Question was asked about design standards of other states in comparison to NCDOT specifically regarding long turn lanes.
6. Attendee noted the need for the Western Connector as a way to divert traffic from siting growth.

US 1

1. How much of the traffic is through-traffic versus local traffic? An origin-destination study should be done. If a high amount of the traffic is local, then a bypass would not really help – you would need to do something to upgrade the existing alignment.
2. “I don’t see a need to create new roads.” There is no need for a “thruway” to improve a short problem section in Aberdeen. The Walthour-Moss Foundation is important – do not just look at this as open land. This is about quality of life.
3. US 1 is a retail employment hub.
4. Re-iteration of need for Origin and Destination Study.
5. US 1 would not be served by a possibility – meaning the bypass.
6. Attendee noted the congestion and back-up delays at the traffic signals in Aberdeen but suggested improvements that limited accesses and improved secondary roads.

General

1. Attendee noted that residents did not want new roads.
2. Multiple requests for better notification and more headway to meetings.
3. Majority of attendees stressed the need for evening meetings.

Program Resumed with “What Does Moore County Need to Know?”

NCDOT CTP project engineer stressed that just as it is important for NCDOT and the Moore County planning partners to understand local concerns and frustrations with the proposed project areas; it is equally important for all parties to understand the project development process that governs the transportation industry for both the public and private sectors.

A review of the rules and regulations NCDOT is governed by throughout the process to develop and deploy transportation projects followed and covered a brief description of how the National and State Environmental Protection Acts impact our focus area projects -- especially US 1 and the Western Connector. *Please see presentation for full descriptions and details.* The presentation noted that one way the CTP is used to ensure the community vision is incorporated into the long-range planning process is through the early identification of important local resources and mapping elements that are also critical to the NEPA and SEPA project development team. This process provides local agencies with the opportunity to preserve the corridors vital to their communities land use plan and long-range vision. Ultimately it helps communities prepare for the NEPA and SEPA studies that will come with the project development process.

The Carthage Bypass was used as an example of this process and also to reiterate the need to preserve corridor for the eventual compliance with the NC 24/27 strategic highway corridor. Corridor preservation is also critical for the Western Connector and for the US 1 corridors as well. Maps showing the Western Connector and R-2591 corridors in 2008 were shown in comparison to the current proposed development. The corridors proposed in 2008 are now in conflict with the proposed developments. Land use along US 1 near Aberdeen, Southern Pines and Pinehurst is heavily developed. A functional design was used as a visualization tool to answer earlier calls for improvements to be made along its existing location.

Western Connector / NC 211 Bypass

Problem: NC 5, US 1, 15-501, NC 211, which are all primary travel-ways in Moore County, have critical sections which are either approaching capacity or are already over capacity based on recent analysis as well as site observation. Development in the southern regions of the county is putting additional strain on the existing roadway system. Improvements to existing facilities will meet feasibility constraints such as railroad right-of-way, topography, and built environment.

1. A multilane facility (type to be determined) is needed to provide southern Moore County connectivity with arterials to the north and relieve congestion along existing facilities. This will also improve access to hospital and surrounding medical complex.
2. R-2591 is the TIP project designed to address the growing traffic on NC 2 and NC 5. Consensus was never reached on the general alignment and where it should tie in to NC 211 and US 1.
3. A private consultant studied a functional alignment which also failed to reach local consensus.

4. No corridor has been protected and newly permitted development now compromises both of the proposed corridors.
5. There is an urgent need to locate and protect a corridor that will relieve and distribute congestion on existing facilities and offer much needed accessibility to the urbanized areas of southeastern Moore County and points beyond by the western developments and communities of the county.

US 1

Problem: Existing US 1 through Moore County must be upgraded to a Freeway facility to provide continuity and compliance with the SHC Vision Plan. Existing location is heavily urbanized, traffic volumes are approaching facility capacity and mobility is threatened. Environmental, cultural, and economic resources are prevalent in the open areas to the east including the Walthour-Moss Foundation. Existing roadways US 15-501 and NC 5 are located in the west and are also facing mobility and capacity deficiencies.

Key Points:

1. Freeways are characterized by high speeds, 4-lanes, median divided, no intersections, interchanges or grade-separated intersections with side streets, no driveways , or closed access.
2. There is strong desire by the local community to protect the Walthour-Moss Foundation and the surrounding Horse Country from a US 1 Freeway alternative to the east on new location.
3. Existing traffic volumes already warrant freeway facility where US 1, US 15-501 and NC 211 intersect.
4. This location has been identified as a concern to mobility and as such has entered the STIP prioritization process in 2011.
5. Accommodations to Fort Bragg are a vital consideration for the US 1 corridor.
6. There are many environmental challenges in the east with the RCW and the Long Leaf Pine ecosystem.
7. The existing location for US 1 has critical right-of-way limitations. Improvements to the existing location would require extreme impacts to the built environments of the commercial districts along US 1 near Aberdeen and Southern Pines.

Work Session and Review of Charrette Materials

Jeremy Rust with Moore County Planning and Community Development presented an example map like those at the focus area tables and how to use planning tools made available. The attendees adjourned to the focus area tables with local planners.

Public Comments Made and Recorded

Comments from Handout Surveys

1. Appearance of maps, easier to understand, functional?

- 1 Large maps are easier to understand and read
- 1 Yes
- 2 No comment

2. Elements of interest mapped sufficiently?

- Cameron – Phillips Memorial Park, city Hall, Water Tank, Baptist Church, Methodist Church
- RCW's and endangered plants

3. Was overlay process helpful?

- 2 Yes
- No comment
- Very effective

4. Professional planner at the table?

- 3 Yes
- 1 No

5. Were your questions answered?

- 2 Yes
- 1 No
- 1 No comment

7. Were the 11X17 maps helpful?

- 1 Just informational
- 0 Provided help with options
- 3 Yes

8. What else does NCDOT need to know?

- Request for presentation to Cameron Board concerning NC 24/27 Expressway.
- Requested a copy of this form and forward to
Carol Lucas
Town Clerk
P.O. Box 248
Cameron, NC 28326
cameronnc@townofcameron.com

Comments from Note Cards

1. Mapping – Add West End Road, Dirt Roads that could be improved.
2. Wilson Proposed – Foxfire ETJ

Comments submitted by Email

1. Col. (Ret.) Earle Ingram

Dear Ms. Bisby,

Thank you for your email and offer to include my comments in the meeting minutes. My comments follow:

Justification for Project R-2591 (Pinehurst bypass - now called the Western Connector) has never been explained satisfactorily to me and to many other people who would be impacted adversely, plus the destruction of thousands of long leaf pines, if such a road were constructed. When we learned accidentally of this project after it was listed in the NCDOT TIP in 1990, we objected. At that time, officials indicated that it was necessary in order to alleviate congested traffic, with emphasis on "through" traffic in the Pinehurst - Aberdeen area on Hwy 211. We contended that the congestion was primarily local traffic and that a bypass of Pinehurst would not be beneficial, would waste millions of taxpayer dollars and would destroy natural resources. Also, we contended that local roads already in place should be improved to accommodate anticipated growth and increased traffic density.

We requested origin- and- destination surveys on Hwy 211 on both sides of Pinehurst. To the best of my knowledge, the last one was conducted on 30 April 2002, and it supported our contention beyond any doubt. Approximately 18% of the vehicles were "through" traffic. Of that 18%, drivers in 13% of the vehicles said they would have used I 73/74 if it had been completed at that time. I 73/74 has been completed between Rockingham and Candor, and it is reasonable to assume that "through" drivers would elect to use it rather than deal with the frequent bottleneck (traffic circle in Pinehurst) and all of the traffic signals on Hwy 211 between Hoffman Road and Hwy 1 in Aberdeen.

Since 2002 local traffic in the Pinehurst area has increased significantly because of the vast expansion of the Moore Regional Hospital and its associated facilities, plus increases at Sandhills Community College. Therefore, the ratio between "local" and "through" traffic has widened.

Very large developments now in the planning stage will also increase local traffic in the Pinehurst area. Hoffman and Foxfire Roads, and probably Linden Road, will require improvements because of the very large Stone Hill development located between Hoffman and Foxfire Roads. Residents in this development will certainly increase the traffic in Pinehurst. Likewise, residents in the Pine Forest development located between Hwy 73 and Hwy 211 will generate more traffic in Pinehurst.

Construction of a Western Connector as depicted on the most recent map available at the MCTC meeting on 25 May will also dump more traffic into Pinehurst via Chicken Plant Road and Linden Road. In addition, if the undeveloped area between the west/southwest side of Pinehurst and Hoffman Road is opened by the construction of a new road, new homes will certainly follow in a very few years. Instead of alleviating traffic density in Pinehurst, the opposite will occur.

We should be planning way beyond 25 - 30 years. Growth in Foxfire Village and the Seven Lakes Community will continue. If planners believe that "through" traffic on Hwy 211 is the problem, then it would be wiser and more cost effective in the long term to select a route for the bypass of the Seven Lakes Community, Foxfire Village and Pinehurst by beginning somewhere west of Seven Lakes - perhaps at Flowers Road using as much of the current roadways as possible - and stay Southwest of Foxfire Village to connect with Hwy 1 somewhere in the vicinity of Pinebluff.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to seeing you at the next MCTC meeting. I would appreciate receiving a copy of the minutes of the 25 May meeting via post. My address is: P.O. Box 1665, Pinehurst, NC 28370.

Sincerely,

Earl Ingram