

## **North Carolina**

### **Lenoir County**

The Highway 70 Corridor Commission of North Carolina, Inc. met on Thursday, May 17, 2018 at 1:30pm at the LaGrange Community Center, 410 Washington Street, LaGrange, North Carolina.

#### **County members present:**

Carteret County – Jesse Vinson

Craven County – Danny Walsh, Jack Veit, Bobby Darden and Donald Baumgardner

Johnston County – Donald Rains, Frank Price and Ted Godwin

Lenoir County – Linda Rouse Sutton and Mark Pope

Wayne County – Wayne Aycock and Jack Best

#### **Other persons present:**

North Carolina Board of Transportation – Gus Tulloss and Hugh Overholt

Highway 70 Corridor Commission Director – M. Durwood Stephenson

North Carolina Department of Transportation – Bobby Lewis, Tim Little, Ronnie Keeter, Preston Hunter, Sam Lawhorn, Chris Pendergraph, Haywood Daughtry, Kerry Morrow, Diane Hampton, Jeremy Stroud and Dominique Boyd

Kimley-Horn – Teresa Gresham

Down East RPO – Patrick Flanagan

Eastern Carolina RPO – Chris York

Upper Coastal Plains RPO – James Salmons

City of Goldsboro/Goldsboro MPO – Jennifer Collins

Craven County Farm Bureau – Tommy Hardy

Johnston County – Todd Marr

Lenoir County – Woody Gurley

Lenoir County Economic Development – Harold Thomas and Keely Koonce

Wilson's Mills – Johnny Eason, Brunette Eason, Valerie Brookens and Leighanna Worley

General Public – Robert and Ophelia Davis

#### **Call to Order and Welcome**

Highway 70 Corridor Commission Vice-Chairman Linda Rouse Sutton called the meeting to order and Woody Gurley, Mayor of LaGrange, welcomed everyone to the meeting.

#### **Approval of the Agenda**

Upon motion of the Carteret County Member Jesse Vinson and seconded by Johnston County Member Frank Price, the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission unanimously approved the agenda.

#### **Approval of Minutes**

Upon motion of Carteret County Member Jesse Vinson and seconded by Johnston County Member Frank Price, the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission unanimously approve the minutes of the meeting on February 22, 2018.

#### **Strategic Corridor Plan**

NCDOT, Statewide Plan Engineer, Kerry Morrow and Teresa Gresham with Kimely-Horn provided the Commission with an overview of the NCDOT's planning efforts to develop a Strategic Corridor Master Plan. The North Carolina Department of Transportation adopted the Strategic Transportation Corridors (STC) Network in 2015 to establish a multimodal, high priority system of highways, rail lines, ports and airports vital to the State's economic prosperity. The STC Report and subsequent Board of Transportation approval call for development of individual strategic corridor master plans in each of the designated corridors. The master plans will develop a consistent transportation vision for the corridor, based on stakeholder input and sound technical assessment, that recognizes statewide economic development objectives, advances subsequent regional planning and corridor project development activities, and can serve to streamline the project development process.

To advance the corridor master plans, NCDOT has been engaging stakeholders across the state, including Metropolitan and Rural Planning Organizations. The project team has been working with stakeholders to gather information on the corridors and coordinate stakeholder engagement activities including participation on the Corridor Steering Committee. Corridor Master Plans are being developed in bundles and bundle #1 has been assigned to Kimley-Horn. Bundle #1 includes **Corridor P** (Future I-42/US 70E/ NCR from I-440 in Wake County to Port at Morehead City), **Corridor S** (I-795/US 117 from I-95 in Wilson County to I-40 in Sampson County), and **Corridor X** (US 258/NC 11/US 13 from US 17 in Onslow County to US 64E in Edgecombe County).

Plan deliverables per Corridor shall include a corridor map, corridor profile, problem statement, corridor access management recommendations, corridor conditions report, and development strategies and identification recommendations report. Draft plans are anticipated in Winter 2019 with Final plans developed in Spring 2019.

#### **I-95/US 70 Build NC – Bobby Lewis, NCDOT COO**

Mr. Bobby Lewis, NCDOT Chief Operating Officer, provided the Commission with an overview of NCDOT's I-95/US 70 Build NC new financing tool, which will allow NCDOT to leverage existing transportation financing capacity. This financing tool will provide stability allowing NCDOT to maintain current level of project delivery, industry partners can build and sustain capacity and projects that communities want and need are delivered without undue delays. Mr. Lewis indicated Build NC can only be utilized if NCDOT continues strong project delivery (spending down cash balance) and will fund projects already in NCDOT's 10-year plan. This tool offers a financing option for rural communities which have never had access to before, will have the same checks and balances as similar successful Federal programs and is backed by the Highway Trust Fund (does not impact General Fund). Mr. Lewis requested support from the Commission by asking counties to contact their respective representatives.

Upon motion of Johnston County Member Donald Rains and seconded by Carteret County Member Jesse Vinson, the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission unanimously approved a resolution to support Build NC and strongly request for Build NC be made into law in the 2018 General Assembly session.

#### **BOT Members Report**

Board of Transportation Member Gus Tulloss indicated he attended a dedication in Benson for the North Carolina Rest Area Safe Phone Zones. There are 58 Rest Areas across North Carolina and NCDOT is partnering with Gecko to highlight rest areas as safe phone zones to encourage drivers to use rest areas

to use phones instead of using phones while driving. He also mention the new driver's license ID which allows people to access federal buildings/airports without having to carry other forms of ID. The DMV is pushing for people to get the Real ID sooner than later.

Board of Transportation Member Hugh Overholt stressed the importance for NCDOT to retain the valuable staff it has today with engineers such as Preston Hunter, Tim Little, Bobby Lewis and John Rouse. NCDOT has lost key players to the private industry and General Overholt stressed the need to push an effort to increase the pay scale to keep valuable engineers employed with NCDOT.

### **Prioritization 5.0 Update**

Patrick Flanagan, Down East RPO, provided the Commission with a Prioritization 5.0 Update. Mr. Flanagan touched on P5.0 scoring changes, the scoring process, project submittals, Statewide mobility funding results, Regional impact funding availability and the remaining SPOT schedule. He highlighted top scoring Statewide projects and top scoring projects for Regional projects for both Region A and B. He stressed the top scoring projects for Regions A and B were only based on quantitative scores only which is 70% of the total score. Regional impact local input window is currently open for 4 months with local points due by July 27, 2018. September 1, 2018 the Division needs local input point window opens for 2 months with local points due by November 2, 2018. He concluded with indicating the 2020-2029 Draft STIP is anticipated to be released in January 2019.

### **Comments from Executive Director M. Durwood Stephenson**

Highway 70 Corridor Commission Director M. Durwood Stephenson reminded the Commission of his involvement in the Flood Mitigation and the importance of preparing for the upcoming hurricane season. He indicated he has been working with Emergency Management who released a 100-page study May 1, 2018 that provided short and long-term recommendations to address flooding. He also indicated NCDOT is working with North Carolina State University on a Flood Study and the report is due early 2019. He concluded with the importance to contact your local emergency management to better prepare yourselves for hurricanes moving forward.

Finally, Mr. Stehpenson indicated Berry Gray is no longer with Johnston County and ensured the Commission that Johnston County Member Ted Godwin would be assigning someone else to the Commission. In addition, he introduced Sam Lawhorn who is the new District 3 Engineer in Johnston & Wayne Counties and welcomed him to the Commission meeting.

### **Remarks – Tim Little, NCDOT Chief Engineer**

NCDOT Chief Engineer, Tim Little, discussed with the Commission the importance of staying focused on the vision of the Commission as NCDOT continues to move forward with construction of I-42. Bypasses are easy to construct but when construction projects come to your backyard, 70 upgrades in Princeton and Wilson Mills for example, its direct impact and the vision is easily lost. It's understood that it gets real for an individual when they have direct access from their home or business on US 70 and NCDOT is trying to construct an Interstate. Mr. Little asked the Commission to continue to offer their support on NCDOT's efforts, as they are making great progress, but just continue to stay on course and support projects.

Mr. Little also followed up on comments provided by Board of Transportation Member, Hugh Overholt, as it relates to NCDOT retaining valuable employees. NCDOT is losing a number of employees. There is a shortage across the board from Engineers to Transportation workers. One of Secretary Trogden's top three priorities is Human Resources and the ability to retain and gain valuable employees within the organization. He stated in today's generation it is not easy to fill positions as in the past and the Commission's support in seeing the value in NCDOT employees is greatly appreciated.

Finally, Mr. Little stressed the importance of Build NC and followed up on the presentation provided by Chief Operating Officer, Bobby Lewis. He stressed if Build NC does not go through the result is delaying of projects. He indicated the Commission's support of Build NC would be greatly appreciated for NCDOT to continue to accelerate projects.

### **Report From Global Transpark**

Allen Thomas, Executive Director for the North Carolina Global Transpark, provided the Commission with an update on the Transpark. Mr. Thomas indicated the park is a 2,500 acres Multimodal Industrial Park with 5,800 acres of "shovel-ready" parcels. The Park is 40 miles to I-95, includes 5.8 miles of rail and has the largest NC civilian runway with an 11,500 foot runway. The Transpark houses 1,420 employees from 21 counties across North Carolina. Twelve tenants occupy the Transpark and the Transpark has 11 staff members.

Mr. Thomas provided an overview of moving the North Carolina Global Transpark forward with efforts in Strategic Planning, Marketing and updates to the Transpark Website. He touched on details of the Strategic Plan and its objectives to improve the Transpark. He stated the goals of the Transpark are to have five year stability with funding and implantation, a focused strategy of global connectivity, a progressive marketing plan and measurable, accountable action steps.

### **Division 2 Update**

North Carolina Department of Transportation Division 2 Engineer, Preston Hunter, updated the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission on the following projects:

- "Little Baltimore" – Grade separated interchange at US 70 and Willie Measley Road. Public meetings in March and received great input. Construction let date of FY 2024.
- Kinston Bypass – Project is on schedule and draft EIS is scheduled to be completed May 2018. Right-of-way is slated for 2022. Construction let day for FY 2025
- US 70 Resurfacing Project – US 70 at 258 east to Dover Exit. Resurfacing contract awarded to Barnhill Construction and completed this fall. Dover to New Bern is scheduled for resurfacing and contract was also awarded to Barnhill Construction. Completion is scheduled for fall 2019.
- James City – Project is on schedule and will include two additional interchanges at Taberna Way and Thurman Road as part of the overall project. Environmental Documents are scheduled for completion in May 2018 with another round of public meetings scheduled for the summer of 2018. Award project in FY 2019.
- Slocum Road Interchange – Project is on schedule and under construction. ST Wooten has completed clearing and utility work has started.
- Havelock Bypass – Currently working with Duke Energy on right of entry access to start utility work. Project is scheduled to let February 2019.

- Newport River Port Bridge Replacement – Meetings scheduled next week with Core Engineers to discuss Concept Designs.
- Gallants Channel Bridge – Two lanes of traffic have been opened to traffic with all lanes being open on bridge late-summer 2018.

#### **Division 4 Update**

North Carolina Department of Transportation Division 4 Engineer, Ronnie Keeter, updated the members of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission on the following projects:

- Clayton Bypass – Resurfacing has started and the contract was awarded to Fred Smith Company.
- Wilson’s Mills – Construction let date scheduled for September 2019.
- R-5829 A/B (US 70 – Johnston/Wayne County line to Goldsboro Bypass) – Public Meeting this past December. Environmental assessment completed in July 2018. Surveys have started and the A portion (Goldsboro Bypass to just east of Princeton) is funded for construction with a let date of 2023. B portion of the project is unfunded.

#### **Financial Report**

Highway 70 Corridor Commission Director M. Durwood Stephenson reported, as of April 30, 2018, there was an account balance of \$250,390.34.

#### **Public Comments**

No member of the public spoke.

#### **Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Highway 70 Corridor Commission will be held on July 19, 2018 at 1:30pm in Carteret County. The meeting location will be at the Morehead Civic Center.

#### **Adjournment**

At 4:00 p.m., Highway 70 Corridor Commission Vice -Chairman Linda Rouse Sutton adjourned the meeting.

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Jennifer K. Collins