Transportation Task Force
1/30/08 Meeting
Minutes

Members Present:

Randy Kincaid, Chairman	Karen Floyd, Secretary	Mayor Jill Swain
Brian Jenest	Chris Ahearn	Mayor Jeff Tarte
Carroll Gray	Mitch Abraham	Mayor Bill Thunberg
Charlie Jeter	Lawrence Kimbrough	Mayor John Woods
Gary Knox		

Land Uses – Planning Directors

Mr. Bill Coxe explained that thoroughfare planning for Mecklenburg County started reaching into north Mecklenburg in 1977. The area identified in the thoroughfare planning under the state and federal guidelines to become urbanized was the area just under Huntersville. Roadway mapping is used in local Ordinances to protect right-of-way and the same is done with Greenways/Bikeways mapping. Connections are still missing to Rowan and Cabarrus Counties and there is a need to plan for better connectivity. Land use patterns that put things close together allow for usable greenways and bikeways. On average, most people will only walk ¼ or ½ mile and ride a bike 1-2 miles. It all depends on the quality of the walk or ride.

Mr. Gordon explained that Huntersville's greenway plan models the County's but also has tiered routes that as development occurs the developer would be required to build as part of their open space requirements.

Mr. Chris Bauer, Mooresville Transportation Planner, explained that Mooresville has comprehensive transportation plan. The pedestrian and bicycle plans will be developed with grant money and also coordinated with Davidson to ensure that connections are made. A unique piece is called the "Collector Street" plans which are local streets that will most likely be built by developers as development occurs. There 84 miles of existing road that have been identified as Collectors and have proposed 23 miles of new roadways as Collectors. They will provide connectivity for short trips without using Hwy 115. Chris Mooresville is adopting a new zoning ordinance that will include a connectivity index. The index is a formula used for new development that takes the number of street segments in the development divided by the number of intersections to determine the street index. The street index will coincide with the land use plan. Connectivity for north/south is not a big issue in Mooresville; however, east/west connectivity has only one, NC150, which is most congested.

Mr. Coxe stated that the likelihood of Hwy 115 becoming a main thoroughfare is not probable so it is important to provide alternatives.

Mr. Jeter asked if it is a matter of "build it, they will come". Mr. Coxe stated that it starts with the land use pattern. Mr. Gordon explained that as development occurs the developer would be required to build their portion of the network. Mayor Kincaid stated that requiring the developer to build a portion is not the issue, the issue is more homes that than create more congestion. Mr. Gordon explained that the developer will build their portion of road which does not necessarily complete the connectivity. The

decision to finish the connectivity would be left up to the town. Mayor Knox stated that land use will dictate where developers can develop.

Mr. Coxe explained that Huntersville has established standards so if a developer does not meet the intersection standard there is a "Do No Harm" clause that the developer needs has to find a way not to adversely impact the intersection. They do not have to fix it but they cannot make it any worse. Mayor Kincaid asked if the clause covered Davidson and Cornelius as well. Mr. Coxe stated that Cornelius and Davidson have not identified standards for their intersections. Mr. Jeter asked if a TIA could encompass the other towns. Mr. Gordon explained that improvements outside the jurisdictions are not enforceable. Mayor Thunberg suggested creating an inter-local TIA that would require a developer to consider the traffic impact as a region and not just the development area. Mayor Thunberg stated that in order to be reasonable under the law, similar plans and indexes would have to be adopted.

Mayor Tarte stated that to determine traffic impact by new development, a 5 mile radius should be used to not necessarily solve the issues but to adequately address them. Mayor Swain recommended the committee take a vote on that concept.

Mr. Coxe referenced the installation of Exit 25 in Huntersville. The interchange changed the world by creating additional development opportunities other than Northcross (i.e. Birkdale, Kenton Place, the expansion of Northcross).

Mr. Krider stated that as the four towns use similar land use language it would seem fair to developers that the similar transportation languages should also be used measures (i.e. standards for measuring intersections, measuring how much the TIA should be). Maybe one APFO with similar language and one Transportation Planner that has the ability to review subdivision plans in the context of how it affects the four towns and counties and also creates an advocate for the region. Mayor Knox asked if that type of service could be provided by Centralina Council of Government. Mr. Krider stated that COG, MUMPO, NCDOT don't always understand the complexity of the issue; however, if you ask Mr. Coxe about Davidson problems he understands.

Mr. Jeter asked Mr. Krider if he was advocating for a Transportation Planner to oversee all four towns. Mr. Krider stated he was.

Mayor Kincaid asked the Planning Directors what they would like to see in the committee report.

- Mr. Simoneau, Huntersville, explained that he has been in the planning business for 25 years and challenged the room to find four communities that have an open line of communication on what is happening in the communities and how to make it work. Every month the four towns' Planning Departments meet to discuss transit.
    - Collaboration between counties, cities, and MPOs is what NCDOT is looking for.
- Mr. Krider, Davidson
    - Regional connectivity matters
    - Quality of life issues
    - Four towns being consistent in standards and design

Mr. Kimbrough stated that the committee is right on.

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Mr. Carroll suggested that a plan needs to be created and ensure that it is not generalized. The towns have never stood united but one voice is much stronger.

Mayor Tarte suggested setting the priorities, sending the message, incorporate commonality, and have accountability.

Mayor Thunberg stated show citizens results by making the intersection improvements under the town's control.

Mr. Simoneau explained that the planning process is to identify issues and options, prioritize the task, collect and interpret the date, evaluate the impact, review, and then implement.

Mayor Kincaid stated that the following goals were possible with the four town's collaboration:

- More money
- Institutionalize regional cooperation
- Institutionalize leveraging with the State

Mayor Kincaid further stated the report needed to have life with authority and substantial revenue source.

Mr. Carroll suggested an annual meeting on past and future visions.

Adjournment
6:31PM

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