Transportation Task Force
2/13/08 Meeting
Minutes

Members Present:

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

North Corridor Rail

Mr. Carol, CATS, explained that the north corridor budget includes enough funding for a parking platform with bus access and station building. Each station is approximately $3M but does not include any off campus (i.e. roads, sidewalks). The towns will need to decide if the off campus improvements that fall under the CIP be accelerated to coincide with the construction of the north corridor. The off campus improvements are important in order to make transit oriented development work and for stations to function and integrate with the existing surroundings. The South Corridor line construction cost was $46M a mile, the Northeast line construction will exceed $60M a mile, and the North Corridor construction cost will be approximately $10M.

Ms. Floyd, Town of Cornelius, explained that Cornelius will need to do approximately $11M in transit infrastructure with some things not required but that are necessary to allow the station to function better. The Transit District is about 355 acres with approximately 172 acres remaining for potential development. The Antiquity development will have approximately 1,100 homes and 300,000 square feet of office/retail that will help create a downtown feel. The rail is considered a perk to Cornelius.

The Town has identified the following improvements needed to support the station:

- Hickory Street
    - Extension
    - Signalization
    - Crossing Upgrade
- Zion Avenue
    - Widening
    - Extension north/south
    - Additional parking
- Catawba Avenue
    - Install grade crossing
    - Sidewalks &Crosswalks
    - Pedestrian signals
- Main Street/NC115
    - Street improvements
    - Sidewalks
    - Curb/gutter

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    - On-street parking
    - Relocate utilities
- Additional connectivity
    - UPWP connections around transit
- Developer paid infrastructure
    - Responsible for everything east of Hwy 115
    - Greenway Connection
        - Signage
        - Path improvements/accessibility
        - Lighting
        - Trail furniture
- Downtown Block Plan
    - Identifies parking decks

Mr. Gray asked what the bulk of the $11M cost will be. Ms. Floyd stated that most of the cost will be incurred by the Zion Street improvements and burying the utility lines.

Mr. Gray asked where the station location for Cornelius would be. Ms. Floyd stated that the station will be located in the Antiquity development along with 4-5 parking decks.

Mr. Jenest asked if the transit station was located in the watershed. Ms. Floyd stated everything east of the interstate falls under the Post Construction Ordinance which affects detention; however, Antiquity was approved and developed prior to the ordinance so it is exempt.

Mr. Kris Krider, Town of Davidson, explained that their goal regardless of transit is to create walkable neighborhoods. The Antiquity covered bridge created connectivity of South Street for Cornelius and Davidson. The initiatives in the transit area were not just focused on road connection for riders of the train but on how the connection improvements would bring people through the towns on a daily basis. The Potts to Sloan Connection is a key connection that will create a local connection that by-passes Hwy 115 and bring people to the transit area. A key intersection that directly impacts the Potts to Sloan Connection is Hwy 115, Potts, and Davidson Street and there are currently three design alternatives being study to come up with the best solution.

Davidson's potential TIF bonding capacity over ten years is $28M.

The potential candidate projects are as follows:

Rail Improvements	$10M
Local CIP Projects	
• Potts Sloan area improvements	$ 1M
• Downtown parking deck	$ 6M
• Downtown road improvements	$ 5M
TOTAL Potential Candidate Projects	**$22M**

The transit district that has been created will ensure that the downtown area remains vital and that the near term projects fund and energized the area as transit comes on line.

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The Town of Davidson sees the transit stop as the center of the community with an increase to in-town residential growth.

Mr. Jenest asked if higher density will be created by transit. Mr. Krider explained that density is not the issue, the issue is design and how it fits Davidson. It's a matter of contributing to the overall ridership without compromising the town.

Mr. Jack Simoneau, Town of Huntersviile explained that Huntersville will have three transit stations; Bryton, Gilead, and Sam Furr.

The infrastructure improvements for the proposed transit station areas are as follows:

SAM FURR

Essential

- Sewer Extension
- Hwy 115 Improvements

Desirable

- Road network (developer)
- Bridge Crossing NC-73
- Jamesburg Dr. Extension

TOWN CENTER

Essential

- Two-way Pair (parallel road to Hwy 115 will be Main Street)
- Two roundabouts

Desirable

- Church Street Improvements

BRYTON

Essential

- Already Accounted For

Desirable

- Parking Deck (partnership)
- Alexanderana/Eastfield connection

The 2025 build out for the transit areas are:

SAM FURR

- 945 Residential Units
- 489,000 sq. ft. office
- 123,000 sq. ft. retail

TOWN CENTER

- 935 Residential Units
- 246,605 sq. ft. office
- 289,340 sq. ft. retail

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BRYTON

- Increased office capacity
- Higher quality office
- Additional Retail

Between the developers of Bryton and Mecklenburg County, there is approximately $29.5 million worth of improvements. The majority of the cost will be spent on moving the rail line and allow for Hwy 115 to be widened. Hambright Road will also extend into Bryton.

Mayor Kincaid stated that he was impressed with the fact that whether or not the train comes north, the four towns have done a great job with inter-connection. Mr. Simoneau explained that a lot time and thought between the towns has been important in ensuring that roads have not been created to go nowhere.

Mayor Thunberg asked if Huntersville had an inter-local agreement with Mecklenburg County. Mr. Simoneau stated that an inter-local agreement using COPS (Certificates of Participation) and the developer pledge that the tax value would cover cost with the land as collateral

Mr. Chris Bauer, Town of Mooresville, explained that Legacy Village accounts for the Mount Mourne Station and includes the roadway, pedestrian, station, and parking infrastructure.

The following infrastructure projects help to support the Mount Mourne Station:

- Fairview-Alcove Bridge (most essential w/estimated cost of $12M)
    - Alternate non-interchange crossing of I-77
    - Provides easy access to residential areas west of I-77
    - Increases service delivery to the station area
- East/West Connector (estimated cost $7M)
    - Provides access to Hwy 115, Shearers Road, NC 3, and NC 152 from new I-77 exit
    - Recommended in Mooresville Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2007)
    - Increases connectivity to Mount Mourne
- CATS Station Service Road (estimated cost $1M)
    - Provides enhanced access to station from Mount Mourne areas west of railroad
    - Recommended in Mooresville Comprehensive Transportation Plan (2007)
    - Increases connectivity to Davidson
- NC 115 Multi-use Path (estimated cost of $2.7M)
    - Connects downtown Mooresville to Davidson
    - Comprehensive Pedestrian Plan (2006) and Comprehensive Bicycle Plan (underway)
    - Provides non-motorized transportation access to station

Mayor Knox made a comment that by the year 2020; approximately 16,000 people will be employed within one mile of Mount Mourne Station. Ms. Ahearn stated that Lowes Corporate will have between 8,000 – 10,000 employees at build out.

Mayor Knox stated that one of the challenges of the North Corridor commuter modeling under the federal guidelines was because no reverse commutes were calculated. Ms. Ahearn added that Lowes employees have expressed an interest in bus services provided from Charlotte, Huntersville, Cornelius

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areas to Lowes Corporate. Mayor Knox further stated that every time you take a car off the road by way of transit it reduces congestion.

Mayor Kincaid distributed a North Corridor Commuter Rail Findings and Recommendations list for the committee to discuss and revise.

Mayor Knox expressed the importance of acknowledging that Charlotte and Mecklenburg County will also benefit from the north line. The transit initiative has been guiding the land use patterns for more than a decade. The ridership projections do not include reverse trips.

Mayor Tarte stated that the north line is very unique because it has destinations points at both ends.

Mr. Jenest stated that it is also important to state the rail line already exists.

Mayor Tarte stated that 70,000 people attend CPCC asked if the student enrollment at CPCC was ever factored in for the ridership because students use multiple campus locations during their education. Mr. Carroll explained that a station at CPCC's North Campus was considered but due to the fact that the campus stands alone in that area it was not factored in.

Mr. Jeter suggested adding Iredell County as a stakeholder in sharing the cost for the North Corridor. Mayor Knox added "while capitalizing on extensive existing infrastructure" to the end of the last sentence.

> *The North Corridor proposal has costs shared among the four towns, the city of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, and the State of NC, and CATS. There are many ways to share the cost.*

Mayor Thunberg asked that Williams Street be changed to reference Downtown Mooresville. Mr. Jeter suggested adding "federal" in front of grant funds.

> *Ridership projections, using federally approved modeling, show 4600 riders per day. This projection assumes that I-77 is widened to four lanes up to exit 36 at the time train service begins. If that widening is not done, ridership on the north corridor will likely be much higher. The temporary terminus for the line is Mount Mourne. The long-term terminus is Williams Street, north of Mooresville. Once the line is built to Mount Mourne, the extension to Williams Street will likely be eligible for grant funds.*

Mayor Woods stated that the implementation of the north line timing and the widening of I-77 are critical.

Mayor Knox stated that another positive note to add is the popularity of the south line.

Mayor Thunberg suggested making a recommendation instead of a conclusion. The sale for commuter rail needs to be made to the citizens.

Mr. Lucas, Huntersville Commissioner, suggested that the last sentence be strengthened to say the partnership has to be both policy wise and financially.

> *The four towns are very eager to enter into the necessary inter-local agreements with CATS, Mecklenburg County, Iredell County and the State on the funding allocations in order to better understand the financial impacts on our towns.*

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Mr. Jeter asked if the towns could count on the County. Ms. Karen Bentley, Mecklenburg County Commissioner, stated that she could not speak for her Board. Mr. Jeter stated that the conditions presented last week are doable from Huntersville's stand point; however, as conditions worsen the political will changes. Mayor Knox asked Ms. Bentley if time frame of April/May would be adequate time for the County Commission to review. Ms. Bentley urged the time frame be the earliest possible.

Adjournment
7:02PM

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