Transportation Task Force
1/23/08 Meeting
Minutes

Members Present:

Randy Kincaid, Chairman	Karen Floyd, Secretary
Brian Jenest	Chris Ahearn
Carroll Gray	Mitch Abraham
Charlie Jeter	

Land Uses – Planning Directors, Karen Floyd (Cornelius), Kris Krider (Davidson), Jack Simoneau (Huntersville), and Tim Brown (Mooresville)

Mayor Kincaid introduced the Planning staff from the four towns and explained that town's Land Use Plans would be presented.

Mr. Bill Coxe, Town of Huntersville, explained that our metropolitan area is faced with growth and how future growth will be handled. The growth statistic shows that from 2005 to 2030, Mecklenburg County's population will grow to 540,000 and the big question is how we will accommodate that population.

The following committees/plans were formed to provide guidance for the future.

- Committee of 100 (1994) – recommended a $.01 sales tax to be used 25% on transit. A collaborative effort was made towards a regional road plan, transit plan, and land use plan that focused on the development coming to the five corridors surrounding Charlotte. In 1999 a ½ cent sales tax was implemented for transit but road way funding received nothing.
- UNCC (1992-1994) – replicated the advice of the Committee of 100.
- Centers and Corridors (1996) – developed long term planning coordination between the local corridors. Davidson, Cornelius, and Huntersville adopted similar land use plans and land development codes that are referred to as the North Mecklenburg "Miracle. Charlotte joined the ranks in 1996 and developed a transit plan, long term transit option, and continued road investment.
- 2025 Transit/Land Use Plan (1998) – final document stated that transit and land use must be integrated.

Mr. Zach Gordon, Town of Huntersville, detailed the current and future land use plans and gave a brief overview shown below:

- <u>1970's and early 1980's</u>: 4 town's land use pattern characterized by Low density residential & limited commercial
- <u>Late 1980's to mid 1990's</u>: Suburban density residential land use, supported by commercial growth along major corridors
- <u>Late 1990's to present</u>:
  Higher density residential development; mixed-use nodes; employment centers; transit-oriented development (TOD)

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The regional population growth for the Lake Norman/I-85 corridor shows in 1990 the population was 91,000 and by 2007 it had grown to 262,000. In comparison with the four town's population growth, 1990 showed 36,000 and by 2007 it had increased to 112,500. The growth projections provided by Charlotte DOT shows that between the years 2007–2030 the Lake Norman/I-85 Corridor will increase by 65% and the four towns will increase by 90%. Mayor Kincaid asked what the percentage rate of growth was. Mr. Gordon stated approximately 2% annually. Money magazine ranked the top 100 fastest growing cities in the country showing Huntersville as 46th and Cornelius as 52nd.

Mr. Kris Krider explained the significance for Small Area Plans and the benefit overall benefit to doing it collectively is to create a sustainable environment with connectivity. The purpose for a Small Area Plan is to encourage investment and manage growth in overall sprawl. The plans are detailed and also inform the developer of the town's expectation.

Mr. Bill Coxe explained that he has been involved in the update process of the regional travel model since the early 1990s. The travel model is updated every 3-4 years. The computer modeling projections for population has been too low; therefore, the projections for transportation were also too low. When there is a high concentration of employment and a high concentration of residential, the projection for travel between the two will also be high. Future street connectivity is essential in creating alternate routes for the projected travel increase.

Mr. Gordon stated that the bottom line is more roads are needed and the widening of I-77 will not eliminate traffic congestion. Huntersville has completed three thoroughfare plans that at some point will be needed. Ideally, development will bare a large part of the cost.

Mr. Tim Brown, Mooresville, the planning entity of the region has collectively worked together over a decade to fundamentally embrace the land use plans. The commonality through the towns land use planning principals that are backed up by zoning precepts extend over 120 square miles. The concept of NODES links the measure of transportation corridors and is significant to all of the planning precepts. The NODES focus urban form to key locations and provide choice on how services are delivered within the communities.

QUESTIONS:

Mr. Jeter asked what will happen to the transit oriented districts if rail does not come. Mr. Krider stated that the growth of Davidson's downtown area will not be to the magnitude anticipated. Mr. Brown added that transit itself is not the solution; it is a part of a regional solution for the transportation issues.

Mr. Jeter asked if land use plans with transit promote the reduction of auto driven mind set. Mr. Brown explained that a better grasp on transportation is done through land use. Mr. Coxe explained that transit is an organizing tool and a travel mode but will not take away a lot of automotive travel. Mr. Krider stated there is a cost benefit side to moving people by mass transit (i.e. air quality).

Mr. Jeter asked how the towns collectively use a common land plan when differences of opinions come into play. Mayor Kincaid stated that as public officials the data provided by Mr. Coxe was never looked at in terms of liking the outcome. Since it has been determined that the outcome in not liked, the key now is to ensure the same mistakes are not made again.

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Mayor Kincaid asked if the roads are conducive to potential development. Mr. Brown stated that NCDOT funding is strapped and infrastructure is going to be a local burden. Mooresville has shifted the burden from one sector to another by requiring traffic impact analysis be done by the developer to determine what the traffic impact of a new development would be. Mr. Krider referenced the Bailey Road Extension, Robert Walker, and Davidson-Concord connections when explaining how funds from NCDOT, Cornelius, CMS, Davidson, and the developer allowed for a connection listed on the thoroughfare plan for many years. Mr. Gordon stated that if development does not pay for new road in large part, the roads will not get done; however, the bigger issue is the structural way roads are funded. New development will not address current problems. Mr. Coxe explained that the private sector will not float much so the public sector will need to be collaborative when local funding proposals are made.

Mayor Knox stated that as the region becomes more urbanized it is important to have the ability to plan for future growth.

Representative Thom Tillis addressed the committee and explained the following key factors to consider when requesting funds from Raleigh:

- There are three other members of the General Assembly
    - Senator Charlie Dannelly who sits on every committee on the senate.
    - Representative Andrew Saunders sits on the Transportation Committee.
    - Senator Malcolm Graham sits on the Transportation Committee
- Understanding of TIP
- What MUMPO stands for
- Understand who are the members of the MTC that will be making the decision on funding of the commuter rail and engineering study of the north line.

Mr. Carroll stated that the plan is good need but there is a need to make it better. Mr. Jeter stated it is not whether or not the plan is good it is the ability to live by the plan as it relates to zoning.

Mayor Kincaid stated that when looking at a development plan, the consequences for the rest of the community and long term consequences should be considered.

Mr. Jenest stated that the four towns have land use plans that come together but questioned if the four towns ever talked about the plans. Mr. Gordon explained that the regional roads that tie all of the towns together need to be identified and then locally support the network.

Mayor Kincaid stated that the region should be guided by set of principles, follow the set principles, and force the elected officials to follow that vision statement. Mr. Jeter stated that Huntersville does not have a clear vision statement but they have agreed to establish one. Mr. Gordon stated that if Mooresville need to be happy with their outcome as they voted to adopt the plan.

Mayor Kincaid suggested that a regional vision be created and try to figure out how to slow the growth rate from 2% annually to 1%.

<u>Adjournment</u>
7:02PM

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