

MINUTES
LENOIR COUNTY TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
November 9, 2011

The Lenoir County Transportation Committee met on Wednesday, November 9, 2011 at 8:30 a.m. in the Lenoir County Administration Conference Room at 101 N. Queen Street, Kinston, NC 28502.

Voting members present included: J. Mac Daughety, Interim Chairman, Dan Sale County at Large, Mayor B.J. Murphy, John Craft for Woody Gurley, Mayor of LaGrange, Donald King, for Mayor of Pink Hill, Joe Bower, Kinston-Lenoir County Chamber of Commerce, Alex Rickard, RPO Planner, and Bill Whaley, Lenoir County Economic Development Board.

Non-Voting members present included: Brian Lucas, City of Kinston Street Superintendent, Mark Pope, Director of Lenoir County Economic Development, Tony Sears, Kinston City Manager, and Adrian King, Pride of Kinston

Also Present: Ms. April Banks, Administrative Secretary

Members absent included: Charlie Diehl, GTP Authority, Joey Bryan, for Lenoir County Manager, Wayland Humphrey, for Lenoir County Planning Board, Betty Caldwell and Preston Hunger, NC DOT, and Joe Albright, Town of Grifton, Manager

Mr. Daughety called the meeting to order at approximately 8:30 a.m.

Mr. Craft provided an update on the Bypass Project from Promise Land Road to Interstate 795. The bid will be opening on December 22, 2011 and awarded within three (3) to four (4) weeks in approximately February 2012. Anticipated completion is fourth quarter 2015. Mayor Murphy inquired if a map was available to view. Mr. Craft answered a map is available on the Hwy 70 Corridor Commission website. Mr. Daughety advised the committee that DOT was present on Monday to speak with the Pride of Kinston.

Mr. Daughety introduced Mr. Tony Sears, the new City of Kinston Manager. The committee introduced themselves to Mr. Sears and welcomed him.

Mr. King provided an update on the Queen Street Bridges Project and Bridge Design. Mr. King stated the focus of this project is the entrance to the City and downtown Kinston. Two (2) years ago, former City Manager Scott Stevens addressed the Pride of Kinston Committee and presented some options for the design of the railing along the sides of the bridges. Mr. King showed recent pictures of the New Bern Bridge, which is almost complete. The bridge has lamp posts, banners, and a Texas Classic bridge railing. The Design Committee asked Mr. Stevens to convey to DOT they liked the design of the New Bern Bridge. From then, they never heard back as to where the design process was and the railings. On October 24, 2011, Interim City Manager Bill Ellis shared with Pride the preliminary drawings for the bridge crossing in Hookerton. Deadlines are needed for the railings by June 30, 2012. The decision making rests with the City. South Queen Street is a major issue with the Pride of Kinston. Mayor Murphy stated an on-site and off-site detour was discussed. The City has agreed to an off-site detour. He stated he understands cutting off Queen Street will impact downtown and businesses on Hwy 70, but it is the best decision. Hopefully, the Pride of Kinston will adopt a formal design. The bridge is estimated to last for 75 years. Mr. Whaley inquired if the design will be a standard two (2) bar railing. Mr. King confirmed it would. There will be cement sidewalks on both sides. Mr. Bower

inquired about the lighting of the bridge. Mr. King responded lighting would be the responsibility of the City including the maintenance. The lighting would be consistent with the current lighting on Queen Street.

Ms. Sandy Landis of the Arts Council is the head of the African American Music Trail Project. On Friday, November 11, 2011, there will be a meeting with the artists for a final design plan. Mr. King stated construction was underway for the new cemetery entrance. They have had lots of public support for the project. The Civil War Museum is also currently under construction.

Mayor Murphy stated a resolution was passed in July 2010 regarding the closing of the bridge and off site detour. Mr. Daughety inquired if it was necessary to draft an additional resolution to make it official that an off-site detour has been chosen. Mayor Murphy stated he does not think another resolution will have to be adopted. The only details are to ensure DOT follows through. Mr. Daughety and Mayor Murphy were invited to attend the next Pride of Kinston Committee meeting. Mr. King advised them the next meeting will be the first Wednesday of December. Mr. Rickard asked if there was any discussion regarding sidewalks on both sides, cross sections, and a bike land accommodation. Mr. King responded Mr. John Williams; the DOT Bridge Project Manager has the detailed set of plans. Mr. Daughety suggested drafting a resolution to move forward for a right of way acquisition in April 2013 and let in 2014. The projected construction is 18 months, but can be extended to 24 if needed.

Mayor Murphy stated from a meeting on September 29, 2011, there will be free flowing traffic in the right lane from 70 West onto King Street at Skinner's Bypass. The medial will also be scaled back to allow more turning room.

Mr. Daughety introduced Mr. James Upchurch of the Planning Branch of DOT. Mr. Upchurch will provide an update of the modeling completed in Lenoir County. Mr. Upchurch stated this is his first time attending the Transportation Committee meeting. He has been working with DOT for 16 years. He travels around the southeast to perform long range planning for counties and towns. These are done in large and small scales. There is an effort underway which involves the Kinston area. Projections are done for 20 to 30 years out. The Model Coordination Team Members are as follows:

- NCDOT TPB: James Upchurch (Team Lead)
- ECRPO: Alex Rickard
- City of Kinston: Brian Lucas
- Lenoir County: Wayland Humphrey
- NC Global TransPark: Charlie Diehl
- NCDOT Division 2: Neal Lassiter and Preston Hunter
- NCDOT PDEA: Mark Pierce (Kinston Bypass Project)
- Model Developer and Consultant: Wilbur Smith and Associates

Mr. Rickard added Amanda Engis is also a planner on the team and Jack Best is on the team due to his position as Chair of the Eastern RPO. Mr. Upchurch explained the logistics of the projections. An area of Lenoir County was selected because it covers about 90-95% of the population. Variables such as employment and household information are used. The committee is to meet directly after the Transportation Committee meeting.

Mr. Pope provided an update on Smithfield Way. A response is waiting to come from the Department of Agriculture and they are trying to complete the right of way acquisition. Discussions with landowners are also underway. There has been a positive response.

Mayor Murphy provided status on the potential closing of College Street crossover on Atlantic Avenue. He stated the City Council approved the College Street Rail Road closing on Monday night's meeting. This will include resurfacing of streets in Mitchell Town and widening the intersection at Vernon and Heritage. A north and south turn on Vernon from Heritage will be incorporated. The grass area behind the Kinston Enterprise Center will be paved and the bumpiness on Blount Street at Tands will be corrected. Upon a motion by Mr. Whaley and a second by Mr. Craft, the Committee unanimously agreed to endorse the left turn signals on the Heritage Street Project. Mr. Bower stated they should consider taking out the signal lights at Heritage and Lenoir. Mr. Daughety agreed. Mayor Murphy stated the citizens may not want the signals removed.

Mr. Daughety stated the Part A construction at the parkway is anticipated to be finished by spring 2012. The paving contract is to come a year after that. DOT Board Members, local members and the Highway 70 Subcommittee is pushing DOT to push up the paving contract to start as soon as the grading is complete on Part A. This is anticipated to be May or June 2012. They are also trying to move up Part C of the parkway around the finishing of paving for Part A. A good response was received from DOT on Part C and Hwy 11/241. Mr. Daughety stated himself and Dwayne Alleygood discussed Albrittons Crossroads, Hwy 11 at Lidell Road, Pink Hill Elementary, and the Kinston City Complex at Will Baker Road and the 258 intersection regarding congestion.

Mr. Rickard provided an update on the RPO and Regional Meeting. General Trogden from DOT met with the Eastern Region RPO and NPO in October. A resolution was drafted with the top five (5) or six (6) top regional projects. These were the Greenville and Kinston Bypass, Hwy 11/241 Project, Maysville Bypass, Hwy 24 between Fort Bragg and Camp Lejeune, Hampstead Bypass, and Hwy 24 to Interstate 95/40. In order for a project to be eligible it had to have been designated 100 points. After January 2012, another Summit will be held with 14 RPOs and NPOs east of Interstate 95. A link will be provided via e-mail for the members to view the public comments, maps, and rankings. The Eastern RPO passed a resolution for full signatory status for RPOs. The NC Association of RPOs in Wilmington passed another last week. There are 13 to 14 agencies on the Merger Team. They have to determine concurrent points in the highway design, purpose, studies, and the final corridor. The decisions have to be unanimous otherwise the process will stop until issues are resolved. Mr. Daughety asked if an endorsement will aid in the process. Upon a motion by Mayor Murphy and a second by Mr. Whaley, the Committee unanimously agreed to draft a resolution of endorsement for the Kinston Bypass.

Mr. Rickard stated the Kinston Bypass, Harvey Parkway, Hwy 11/241, Carey Road Extension, and the Hwy 11 Connector have 100 points. There is an additional dedicated to Smithfield Way. Depending upon the progress of the project, points can be designated to other parts in the region. Mr. Rickard asked the Committee if they should move forward with the Public Workshops on the Hwy 11 Corridor Study and to formally request DOT to conduct a feasibility study on Hwy 11/55 to Ayden Bypass being an upgrade to a freeway. Mayor Murphy inquired if there were any objections. Mr. Rickard stated some citizens may object to the

conversion of Hwy 11 to a freeway function with full access and overpasses and interchanges. Mayor Murphy asked if this would affect the Pepsi Plant entrance. Mr. Rickard stated there is a proposed interchange for the entire park. A feasibility study from engineering is possible to study cost and environmental constraints. Upon a motion by Mr. Whaley and a second by Mayor Murphy, the Committee unanimously agreed to have DOT conduct the feasibility study. A NC Hwy 11 Connector study had been completed and this would be the same process. The next link of the connector would be the Northern bypass. This would be a long term project.

Mr. Daughety asked the wished of the Committee regarding a December Meeting. Mayor Murphy recommended not meeting if it wasn't necessary. Mr. Daughety stated the Committee will not have a December meeting, but will reconvene in January 2012. It has been a great year for the Committee and a phenomenal job has been done. All important projects are ranked at the top of the RPO and there is regional support for two (2) additional projects. Mr. Daughety thanked the Committee and stated he appreciated their hard work.

Mayor Murphy congratulated Mr. Donald King on obtaining the top votes for the Pink Hill Board. Upon a motion by Mayor Murphy and second Mr. Craft, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted by
April L. Banks
Administrative Secretary