



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR

EUGENE A. CONTI, JR.
SECRETARY

**North Carolina Board of Transportation
Environmental Planning and Policy Committee
Meeting Minutes for February 2, 2011**

A meeting of the Environmental Planning and Policy Committee (EPPC) was held February 2, 2011 at 4:00 PM in the EIC Room of the Transportation Building. Nina Szlosberg-Landis chaired the meeting. Other Board of Transportation members that attended were:

Wanda Proffitt
Chuck Watts

Gary Ciccone
Michael Fox

David Burns

Other attendees included:

Phillip Ayscue
Gene Conti
Julie Hunkins
Julia Merchant

Jimmy Newkirk
Angela Person
Jay Stem
Amy Simes

Mrs. Nina Szlosberg-Landis called the meeting to order at 4:05 PM and accepted a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the December 2010 committee meeting. The minutes were approved as presented.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis began by letting everyone know that the meeting would include a discussion about the connection between the built environment and public health. There is a huge movement underway in America in the public health community trying to encourage more walking and more active lifestyles because that encourages better health. There has been an inter-disciplinary team working on this and she thought it would be good to get an update on what is happening in North Carolina. Ruth Peterson from the Division of Public Health with the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services was the presenter.

Ms. Peterson started by reiterating that she works with the North Carolina Division of Public Health and directly reports to Dr. Ingle, who is the State Health Director. Mr. Ingle has four sections underneath him. One of those sections include the Chronic Disease and Injury section, which Ms. Peterson oversees, that includes physical activity and nutrition, Type II diabetes, heart disease and stroke, hypertension and obesity, to list a few. That puts her in a position with this section to be able to really reduce the mortality related to chronic disease and injuries. They are trying to figure out how to shape policy and how to work with environmental change to do the

right things across the state of North Carolina. She discussed the common ground on the road to health. She also briefly introduced Jimmy Newkirk who works with the Nutrition Branch.

Certain aspects of the transportation infrastructure are assisting with more walking and biking that translates into real health status changes. The challenge is that there is a transportation network that favors vehicles that contribute to the decrease of physical activity across the state and country. Statistics show that out of our commuters in North Carolina, less than two percent of the residents walk and two percent of them bike. The scary thing when looking at the whole impact is the change in the young children. Younger children don't bike or walk to school like the older generation once did. Statistics show that there is a 68% reduction in the school age children that commute to school by walking or biking. Research also indicates that sixty percent of adults would increase physical activity if there were more sidewalks and trails available.

North Carolina is well known for having a disparity in chronic disease. Two thirds of the North Carolina population is overweight or obese. A third of North Carolina's young children are obese. North Carolina is the thirteenth leading state for Type II diabetes. Type II diabetes is the type of diabetes that you get from being overweight and having problems with your insulin control because of your weight status. This can usually be controlled by diet and exercise. Heart disease and stroke are more prevalent in the South, and our risk of stroke and heart disease is dramatically worse than other people in our region. Health disparities between different races and age groups have been discussed. There is a disadvantage among our African American population in the state of North Carolina for the risk of stroke, heart disease and hypertension. Breast and colon cancer are some of the leading cancers in the state, but they are microscopic compared to lung cancer rates from tobacco smoking and tobacco products sold in the state for so long.

Physical inactivity is a strong factor for all people. The one thing we can do in North Carolina to make a difference with all the chronic diseases to make the healthy choice the easy choice, which is physical activity and access to healthy food choices. Everyone should be getting 150 minutes of moderate physical activity each week. It doesn't have to be done all at one time. Just five to ten minutes a few times a day each day during the week can amount to the 150 minutes of activity a week needed. Going to a gym is a great way to stay active, but you can also stay active in other creative ways like walking to the bus stop or the light rail system. Obviously the more physical activity you do, the more benefit you receive. Only 44% of North Carolinians say that they get the correct amount of physical activity compared to the 49% in the United States which is not great, but understandable because North Carolina is not making those choices as easy as they could be for people.

The cost of what unhealthy lifestyles bring to North Carolina is \$ 57 billion annually. That includes high cholesterol, smoking, physical inactivity and a lot of other things clumped together. The cost for all of these are not just medical cost but the indirect cost such as loss of productivity. The cost for physical inactivity alone in North Carolina is \$ 11.9 billion for health care costs, indirect cost and pharmaceuticals. People who report having more access to sidewalks are 28% more likely to be active. People who report having access to walking and jogging trails are 55% more likely to be active. If you take that success, which is documented and tie that back to the

cost of all of the adverse health outcomes, it starts to feel like there is a great partnership between what the NC Department of Transportation can do and where there is a burden of physical inactivity across the state.

People have shown that the more facilities available in their area, the more they will walk and stay physically active. Generating two more walking and biking trips per person a week can prevent up to 1.7 pounds of weight gain per year. The problem in North Carolina is the way our line is going up for the prevalence obesity. Just being able to prevent weight gain and maintain and keep North Carolina's statistics at 66% would put us in a better place than we are now. People in NC Department of Commerce are starting to look at this more when they talk to businesses into coming to the State of North Carolina. There are two numbers generally associated with the quality of life: (1) the mortality rate which is an excellent marker for the overall health status in the community and (2) life expectancy.

In cases where public transportation is available, you have to walk to get public transportation and then you have to walk home. With the 150 minutes you need of physical activity, you can get it any way you want. With eight minutes to the transit stop and eight minutes to get home, you have already met 16 minutes in a day. Five days of week of that routine will put someone well on their way to meeting the 150 minutes a week goal, which will have an influence on their health status and help decrease their health care cost. It's clearly evident from research that people who use public transportation are less likely to be obese than adults who don't use public transportation. Some people may have no other way to get to work than using the public transportation, but from the public health standpoint, we want people to have the healthy choice to be the easy choice. A lot of people have no choice to ride public transportation but they are trying to change the minds of the people who do have a choice to make it the right choice and ride public transportation.

Compared to people who walk to transit and compared to people who don't, the saving is \$5,500 per person. It doesn't sound like a whole lot till you start having to pay more of your health care costs. A light rail line in Charlotte was installed, and 498 people were surveyed who lived around that area and were asked about their use of the light rail line before and after it was built. It was then compared to people who were not in the area. There was a significant reduction in the body mass index (BMI) and people were less likely to become obese compared to those in the study area who did not use light rail. If there is a change made that promotes active living, people should be educated about the positive impact. The NC Department of Health and Human Services has an economist who could take this out to a cost, which is the message that should be given to the employers in the state and the insurers.

The NC Sustainability Task Force was created last year by the Legislature. The goal is to help healthy and equitable development without compromising natural systems and the needs of future generations of North Carolinians. It includes the mobility, health, economic, vitality, safety and equitable and affordable housing. Sustainable communities principles include better transportation choices to offer non-motorized transportation options to promote public health and recognizing and supporting communities and neighborhoods by investing in healthy, safe

walkable neighborhoods, which will help people meet there 150 minutes a week of physical activity.

One Board member commented that five years ago when he was on the Planning Board in Greensboro, the City Transportation Director came to the Planning Board and said that they wanted to change the guidelines for city streets. It was odd to him that they were making the streets more narrow and more restricted. The term for what they were doing is called traffic calming, which is to calm down the flow of traffic.

A lot of health directors have told Ms. Peterson that it is important that DOT help make communities more walkable. The point is that we are all trying to make the communities walkable, but for different reasons; ultimately, we all need to be on one accord. One of the things that has made her work so exciting is the historic collaboration built up since 2006. Initially a group called the Health Environment Collaborative was brought together at the secretary level. The intention was to have the departments of Transportation, Commerce, Environment and Natural Resources, and Health and Human Services at the same table to talk about some of the things that could be done to integrate and influence inter-departmental efforts to improve the health of North Carolina's people, environment and economy. This work has been really instrumental with all the things that are being implemented in public health.

Current efforts for the Healthy Environment Initiative include a policy analysis that identifies the policies across all the agencies that promote physical activity. There were 339 policies to look at across departments and divisions. Input was gathered from state and local stakeholders about the policy issues and their perspectives on those policies. In addition, eleven community partners are working on examples where policies may help to promote physical activity access or where policies get in the way. The interviews indicated that everyone needed more funding at the state and local level for biking, pedestrian, planning and infrastructure. People talked about how more collaboration could result in more efficient decision-making. There should be more coordination between land use and transportation planning.

The NC Department of Transportation is doing good things with Complete Streets, Safe Routes to Schools, bike/pedestrian planning grants, Transportation Enhancement grants and light rail, but more needs to be done. On one of the slides included in Dr. Petersen's presentation, the national data for DOT Investments shows that hard work does pay off; as the population increases over time, the amount of investment in types of transportation that involve physical activity has also increased.

In North Carolina, we are trying to position ourselves to be a national leader in the health impact assessments. The disease control has given the Physical Activity and Nutrition Branch (PAN) a charge to figure things out for the rest of the states. Ms. Peterson is working with University of North Carolina partners to figure out how to develop the processes to assess the health impact of infrastructure projects and how to train communities to do this. Some of the pilot money from Center for Disease Control is being used to develop and deliver those trainings. There is a waiting list on the trainings. There are people who want them to come to their communities but they can't distribute the staff they have to go and talk about how to measure the health impact

from some of the changes made. They want to figure out if there are ways to integrate health impact assessment into other assessment systems, such as the community impact assessment used as part of the transportation project development process.

The NC Sustainability Task Force is developing a community assessment tool and a scorecard system for the purposes of administering grants across the state to assist with sustainable community development. Ms. Peterson spoke with a person from the triad area who is doing a lot of work on the long range comprehensive planning. They had been working on a project for a number of years on integrating on the CTP process and integrating long range planning and NEPA. They started talking about health impact assessments and how that might possibly be able to be done in the long range planning process. The group in the Triad is considering performing some level of health impact assessment at the long range planning level on the scenarios that they will be analyzing once they get two or three and will likely have some measures of effectiveness of what they are trying to accomplish for their community and look at the differences that the scenarios provide in terms of the health impacts. That would be a trail run and if it's a best practice, it could be integrated more into long range planning across the state. The next stage would be to take the results of the high-level health impact assessments on scenarios at the long range planning level and carry forward information to inform individual projects that come from these long range plans. Health impact assessments could also be conducted for certain projects during the project development stage, likely as part of the community impact assessment.

The health status in North Carolina is turning businesses off because 66% of our people are obese and health care costs are higher; as a result, business won't come to North Carolina. Part of fixing this would be to make communities more walkable and decreasing the adverse health outcomes from physical inactivity. Connect land use and transportation planning are not synchronized, resulting in sprawling and inefficient communities. If you have a school siting way out in an undeveloped area because the land is cheap, it is great for the developer and the town because initial costs may be low, but it is not good when trying to promote physical activity for the children who become or already are obese or overweight. Ms. Peterson and her team are here to help people consider the health impact of the policies that they do with transportation and land use. They need not only state level people as part of the discussion but also local people at the table. There is a direct link between what NCDOT does and what public health does. There is a great system in place to build on the current efforts and they are ready to move forward together to do what they can to facilitate the positive impact on the state of North Carolina.

Mr. Conti stated that he was glad Ms. Peterson was here to spread the message. The Department of Transportation will continue their involvement in the activities that are already taking place to make North Carolina better.

Mr. Fox stated that the issue is local communities often have all the control to make decisions on where things get built and how they get built. How do you involve the local communities so they are aware of all the issues?

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis stated that way to involve local communities is with NEPA. In this process there are direct and indirect and cumulative impacts. This could be a way of changing those decisions.

Mr. Fox mentioned doing this with the carrot method. You get so many extra points from the transportation project prioritization process if you have a plan and followed it and it's designed to promote use of the transportation system.

Mr. Watts commented that the key is to push that down to the local communities and promote it is their planning process.

Ms. Peterson commented that through the NC Sustainable Communities Task Force, one of the things they are doing is developing a community assessment tool for communities to use to ascertain how their plans, policies and actions promote good health, economic vitality and other issues. The Task Force has also been asked to look at its state discretionary pots of money and programs where the state agencies may also adopt very similar criteria and get that embedded in some of their existing programs.

Mr. Ciccone commented that no developers, zoning boards and county commissioners think about the health impact. They will think about safety but not health. The challenge is to get to local community boards.

Ms. Peterson mentioned Mitch Silver, who is the planning person for Raleigh and is now the head of a national planners association and is on the Task Force as well. He is starting to understand the health impacts of some decisions made in Raleigh. He is very interested in including some health impact assessments in Raleigh's planning efforts.

Ms. Peterson asked to come back at a later date and show the Board the results of the policy analysis and get feedback from the group on how to move forward in the right way to make a positive influence on some of the policies.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis suggested doing some presentations with the League of Municipalities and the County Commissioners and the Association of Planners.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis adjourned the meeting at 5:00 P.M.

JH/ajp



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**North Carolina Board of Transportation
Environmental Planning and Policy Committee
Meeting Minutes for March 2, 2011**

A meeting of the Environmental Planning and Policy Committee (EPPC) was held March 2, 2011 at 3:30 PM in the EIC Room of the Transportation Building. Nina Szlosberg-Landis chaired the meeting. Other Board of Transportation members that attended were:

David Burns	Gary Ciccone	Wanda Proffitt	Chuck Watts
Conrad Burrel	Andy Perkins	Gus Tulloss	Ralph Womble

Other attendees included:

Christie Barber	Berry Jenkins	James Martin
Wally Bowan	Leigh Lane	Julia Merchant
Bill Gilmore	Don Lee	Angela Person
Julie Hunkins	Harrison Marshall	David Robinson

Mrs. Nina Szlosberg-Landis called the meeting to order at 3:30 PM and accepted a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the February committee meeting. The minutes were approved as presented.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis began by letting everyone know that the discussion today would be about sustainability and how it plays a part with the vitality in communities, the economy and the environment. Julie Hunkins, Manager of the Quality Enhancement Unit with the North Carolina Department of Transportation and Leigh Lane from the Center of Transportation and the Environment (CTE) of NC State University were presenters.

Overview of Sustainability Blueprint Work To Date

Ms. Hunkins introduced the concept of sustainability as a three-legged stool or as the triple bottom line: social (quality of life), economic (jobs) and environmental (natural and built). She explained that department's work to develop a "sustainability blueprint" originated by a working group of individuals within the Department that attended an AASHTO Peer Exchange well over a year ago. This group began developing a plan to incorporate sustainability principles and concepts into business practices as a result of the Peer Exchange. The working group includes representation from planning, preconstruction, public transportation, operations and maintenance, the communications areas within NCDOT and from Federal Highways. An advisory group of senior leadership is also overseeing the development of the blueprint (a

handout of the management structure was provided to the EPPC members). Ms. Hunkins mentioned that the blueprint work initially has centered around two major tasks: (1) to review what other state DOTs around the country have done in terms of sustainability plans and (2) to conduct a survey to inventory current practices that DOT is already doing that reflect sustainable principles. CTE is providing general support for development of the blueprint, as well as other sustainability-related activities; they have developed a website for the working group that includes short summaries of the review of state sustainability plans of all the nine state DOTs that have sustainability plans, as well as the results of the survey. The website for the blueprint is <http://www.cte.ncsu.edu/cte/sustainability/index.html>.

Ms. Hunkins turned the meeting to Ms. Leigh Lane to report on the review of state DOT sustainability plans and results from the NCDOT sustainable practices survey.

Ms. Lane reported out on the Executive Summary for the scan of State DOT sustainability plans (handout) stating that the CTE staff reviewed the plans, including examination of the precipitating forces and events that led to the plan development, how the plan was developed, what the plans included and how the plans would be implemented. Nine state DOTs (New York, Maine, Massachusetts, Ohio, California, Illinois, Washington, Oregon and District of Columbia) were selected to be reviewed because they had already put “pen to paper” and prepared a plan report or developed formal processes to integrate sustainable principles across the department.

The states included in the review represent small to large populations. In contrast to NCDOT, all these State DOT’s own and operate a small percent of the total lane miles within their state, except DCDOT with 92%, which is only 1,390 miles. Each plan uses different language to describe what they plan to do, how they plan to do it and how they will evaluate their progress through performance measures and metrics. What is clear from the plans reviewed across the country is that there are many different approaches that a State DOT can take to the end of integrating sustainable principles department-wide.

Five of the plans reviewed resulted from legislative mandates, which precipitated a top-down approach to institutionalizing sustainability. Two of the four plans that were not mandated chose a voluntary program approach that involves a rating system for projects and encourages project managers to strive for the highest rating possible. This system acts as a proxy measure of performance. Specific measures are not tracked for long-term performance towards department goals; therefore, there is no set accountability system-wide. This is considered a bottom-up approach.

Most plans were developed through internal process only. A couple of plans resulted from both internal and external coordination.

The plans that do the best job linking goals and objectives to strategies and performance measures are DCDOT and California’s Smart Mobility Plan.

Again, Ms. Lane mentioned that all the state DOT plans were different. For example, Washington DOT is focusing on managing wise use of taxpayer dollars and minimizing energy and water use. Washington DC is focusing on promoting transportation and land use and

improving mode choices, accessibility and mobility. Massachusetts's focus is on reducing greenhouse emissions and promoting the healthy transportation options of walking, bicycling and public transit. New York's focus is protecting and enhancing the landscape's ability to regulate climate change, provide cleaner air and water and improving quality of life. Oregon's focus is health and safety and social responsibility, workforce well-being and development. Maine's focus is ensuring a safe and secure transportation system and sustainability of Maine's transportation systems. California's focus is on location efficiency and reliable mobility. Illinois' focus is on context sensitive solutions, land use and community planning and context sensitive design. Ms. Lane mentioned that all these provided examples used to generate the focus areas that she will present later in the meeting for input by the committee members.

Next Ms. Lane reported that a survey on NCDOT sustainability practices (handout of survey findings provided) was distributed to 173 NCDOT staff in leadership positions (top managers) in all divisions plus 35 organization units. 37% submitted at least one practice; approximately 100 practices were received. These practices covered many areas including materials, multi-modal, infrastructure construction, operations and maintenance, financing, planning and design, office technologies, data management, administrative efficiencies, waste stream, buildings and facilities, human resources, and equipment fleet. The respondents assigned 47% of the practices reflective of environmental stewardship, 35% reflective of delivering a sustainable, high-performance transportation system and 18% to enhancing quality of life by integrating transportation with the built environment. In addition, questions were asked about the value of sustainability principles to NCDOT. The majority of respondents saw value in marketing (67%) and return on investments (66%). When asked about information to learn about sustainability practices at NCDOT, managers indicated that they want more information on return on investment (ROI) including both financial and non-monetary benefits. They believe there is a value of what they are doing related to sustainability, but it is not always calculated.

The survey is still open and the Working Group will continue to build on the inventory and will continue to use the results as the foundation for the blueprint.

Discuss of the Sustainability Focus Areas

Ms. Hunkins provided a handout of the focus areas developed by the working group and subsequently reviewed and revised by the advisory group. The draft focus areas for discussion included the following:

Mobility and Accessibility

- Reliable mobility
- Improve mode choices and accessibility
- Promote the healthy options of walking, bicycling and public transit

Financial and Economic Investment for Sustainability

- Enhance the financial stability of DOT's transportation system including balancing resources with needs
- Manage wise use of taxpayer dollars

- Promote economic vitality and competitiveness through transportation investments (leveraging other resources) which stimulate regional, local and community economic development
- Effective cost assessment and decision making
- Institutionalize sustainability as an agency value

Environmental Sustainability

- Protect the natural environment and conserve resources (includes material resource flows, water quality and quantity, air quality)
- Reduce climate change impacts and increase energy conservation and efficiency
- Improving NCDOT operations and project development
- Improve air quality and mitigate climate change impacts
- Climate change adaptation
- Protect and enhance water quality
- Reduce greenhouse emissions

Social Investment

- Health
- Safety and security
- Enhance public awareness and participation (information and education; internal and external partners)
- Enhance quality of life
- Use transportation investment as a tool to promote community development

Integration of Transportation and Land Use

- Mobility options, accessibility, and transportation land use integration
- Promote integration of transportation and land use
- Support smart growth development

Ms. Hunkins and Ms. Lane then asked for feedback from the Board on what stands out to them when looking at the focus areas.

Mr. Watts mentioned that DOT's mission statement could include the community. He mentioned the three P's (people, planet, profit).

Ms. Hunkins agreed that it is extremely important to relate to the Department's mission and goals to the concept of sustainability.

Mr. Watts asked, "How did the other nine DOT's measure sustainability?"

Ms. Lane answered that sustainability was being measured by other states in a variety of ways. A few mentioned were Washington State with taxpayers dollars and Massachusetts by reducing greenhouse emissions.

Mr. Gilmore stated that environmental sustainability is not doing as good a job as they would like but much better than they were in the past. They have a 95% to 25% success now heading with a 75% success rate. Forty percent of DOT projects are delayed for permits. There is zero percent for mitigation impact but it is usually sustainable. Much of the water quality beyond DOT projects.

Mr. Watts asked, “How much was done on the working group for design and maintenance since planning is different than operations?”

Ms. Hunkins stated that practices came from all 14 Divisions, as well as the units and divisions from the central offices.

Mr. Watts asked is this being adequately communicated to our stakeholders. What about legislation? What is DOT doing now?

Ms. Hunkins stated that DOT is not yet communicating the blueprint to stakeholders because it is still in the development phase; the department will be conducting outreach to external stakeholders this summer in support of the plan. In the meantime, we do have success stories to share. Currently, there is no specific outreach to the Legislature, but the working group will be developing an external outreach plan.

The EPPC committee talked about the department’s practice of using recycled asphalt, as well as other sustainable practices that are good for the environment and save money by improving public health and obesity. Ms. Szlosberg-Landis stated that using sidewalks encourages people to be physically active and can result in positive health outcomes.

Ms. Lane stated that there is a lack of research to support return on investments. The research is ongoing and will eventually be available to inform policy decisions.

Mr. Watts stated that other States may understand local politics better than others.

Ms. Hunkins stated that some of those states are legislated to address GHGs and to reduce VMTs. Washington DOT is being mandated to reduce VMT’s by 50% over the next couple decades.

Ms. Hunkins remarked that the next steps for the blueprint working group are to develop internal and external outreach plans to vet the focus areas and add to the database of practices. Once this outreach is complete, she indicated they will come back and brief the EPPC about what they heard and how the plan is shaping up based on that input.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis adjourned the meeting at 4:30 P.M. The next meeting of the Environmental Planning and Policy Committee is to be determined.

JH/ajp



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**North Carolina Board of Transportation
Environmental Planning and Policy Committee & Multimodal Committee
Meeting Minutes for May 4, 2011**

A joint meeting of the Environmental Planning and Policy Committee (EPPC) and Multimodal Committee was held May 4, 2011 at 3:00 PM in the Board Room (Room 150) of the Transportation Building. Mrs. Nina Szlosberg-Landis chaired the meeting. Other Board of Transportation members that attended were:

Mike Alford	Sam Halsey	Gus Tulloss
David Burns	Andy Perkins	Chuck Watts
Bob Collier	Wanda Proffitt	Ralph Womble

Other attendees included:

Catherine Campbell	Tracey Humphries	Amy Simes
Charles Fearing	Tim Johnson	Patrick Simmons
Jennifer Garifo	Don Lee	Chandra Taylor
Bill Gilmore	Julia Merchant	Harold Thomas
Phil Harris	Sarah O'Brian	Kumar Triyedi
Jerry Higgins	Angela Person	Richard Walls
Jim Humphrey	Lisa Reigel	

Mrs. Szlosberg-Landis called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM and accepted a motion to approve the EPPC meeting minutes from the March committee meeting. The minutes were approved as presented.

Mrs. Szlosberg-Landis began by letting everyone know that the discussion today was about the work at the NC Sustainability Communities Task Force. There are a lot of agencies involved in that as well as the NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) and NCDOT. Mrs. Szlosberg-Landis introduced David Knight with the Study Commission Task Force as the presenter.

Mr. Knight stated that he is the designated Chair appointed by the Secretary of DENR and Jim Westmoreland is the Vice Chair. He gave an overview of the Task Force and the history of how and why it was formed, the purpose of it and what has been done to date. He stated that Mr. Westmoreland would talk more about the program and where they would go with it from here.

The Task Force was officially created through last year's state budget bill. With that came \$250,000 in non-recurring funds. The Task Force came out of a product of the Urban Growth and Infrastructure Study Commission, which was put together a few sessions ago and chaired by Senator Floyd McKissick and Representative Jennifer Weiss. What came out of that Commission was the recommendation to create a Task Force that would be ongoing and permanent. The goal of this new initiative is healthy and equitable development without compromising natural systems and the needs of future generations of North Carolinians.

The Task Force, as well as the Urban Growth Commission, was based on what is going on at the federal level. The six sustainable principles come from the Federal Sustainability Principles. This is a partnership among US Department of Housing and Urban Development, US Environmental Protection Agency, and the US Department of Transportation. At the federal level, the general principles listed below are what should be looked at by sustainable communities within a state:

- Better transportation choices
- Equitable, affordable housing
- Enhanced economic competitiveness
- Support of existing communities
- Coordination and leverage of state policies and investment
- Recognize and support communities and neighborhoods

The principles are considered guidelines for the work of the Task Force. The Legislation created the Task Force in the summer of 2010. There are three appointers -- the Governor, the Speaker and the President Pro-tem, all of whom appointed their members in October 2010. The Task Force has six different agencies or departments that are also a part of the collaboration to making things happen. The appointees from the Senate, as well as the House of Representatives, come from the Winston-Salem, Asheville, Raleigh, Triangle J, Charlotte and Durham areas.

The Task Force has met six times because they are trying to move money within the fiscal year. A report was due in October of 2010 regarding the status of state agency efforts. They created policies that were the support framework for the grant program. They created a "scorecard" which is what the applicants used for the eligibility purposes and for applying for state funding; the scorecard is better known as the Communities Practices Assessment. It was a complicated process and took a lot of work to get the assessment created using models from other states and looking how they developed their scorecards. North Carolina, however, is one of the first five states in the nation to do this process. Federal agencies have noticed North Carolina's efforts and are looking to help North Carolina and its communities in terms of financial and other types of assistance.

Stakeholder input from outside of the Task Force was used in the development of the Assessment and included the League of Municipalities, the UNC School of Government, Council of Government planners, as well as the federal agencies mentioned above. They are using the Assessment as an educational tool. The "scorecard," or Assessment, is required by the Legislation. If applying for funding by the Task Force, the Assessment would have to be

completed and used as a guide for what is being done in the local municipality or county. It is the basis for the grand scheme scoring.

Mr. Westmoreland stated that the Task Force is an extremely important element to the State of North Carolina. Again, he mentioned that the model for the Task Force was fashioned after the federal model. The real basis behind the model in North Carolina is to do simple but important things. One was to break down silos amongst agencies, where NCDOT, DENR, the NC Department of Commerce and other agencies are better coordinating and collaborating our activities. The second important element is to make better investment decisions in total for the state that has all the right ingredients and mix of things involved. Each one of the respective agencies has their own programs and funding sources, and a lot of times there is no coordination when the opportunities are there.

The Secretaries of DENR, NCDOT and Commerce all got together in October of 2009. They were given the charge to look more closely at the opportunities to support more sustainable communities within the State. They were also given the chance to go to Washington, DC and participate in the Governor's Institute Conference. At the Conference they were told what was going on with the federal movement in sustainability.

In reference to the grant fund at the state level, there was \$250,000 dollars allocated towards development and implementation of a sustainable community grant program for North Carolina. There were three things important to the Legislation regarding the grant funding. First, the grant funding is to be used to improve regional planning and coordination activities, specifically looking at how housing and transit options can be linked. Second, the Task Force should work to increase the capacity of regions as it relates to land use planning and zoning practices. Third, there are at least \$150 to \$200 million in federal money that has already been used for various planning grant activities and construction activities associated with sustainable communities; the grants should be used to leverage further funding for sustainable community development here in North Carolina.

The eligible grant recipients, as defined by Legislation, include regional bodies, cities, counties, metropolitan cities, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Rural Planning Organizations (RPOs) and regional transit agencies. There are other agencies that are eligible that would have to have their request formulated through the Task Force. There are three things defined in the Legislation as it relates to the people being eligible to receive funding. There has to be an established regional partnership amongst the different entities. For example, if Winston-Salem applied for a grant, they would have to be a part of a bigger regional metropolitan collaboration and would have to provide a work plan with the request in terms of what they want to do with the funds and how they would do a proposed participation process to select the projects that may be requested. Also, a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) would have to be provided with the application defining how they would work together collaboratively.

The Legislation defines the different regions of the state that are eligible to apply for the grant funds. This provides the profile of the project scoring process in terms of the grant application process. There are four specific factors looked at which include regional collaboration, need, implementation of sustainable development principles, and project effectiveness.

Fifteen applications were received from a wide variety of different entities. An RFP was issued in March of 2011 and none grants were awarded. One of the groups awarded funds of \$40,000, was the Blue Group Corridor Group. They are currently conducting a comprehensive corridor study that will look at how they will develop or redevelop Blue Ridge Corridor between Hillsborough Street and Glenwood Avenue. This was projected to be a \$50,000 study. They have already started some public involvement associated with the project.

The Town of Morrisville Transit & Affordable Housing Plan was awarded \$40,000 for a \$167,000 study. This study is focused on how to look at a potential regional rail system in Morrisville and develop the rail stop with a focus on transit-oriented development.

Central Carolina Council of Government was awarded \$40,000. They have 150,000 acres of vacant or industrial underutilized land in the county. They want to develop a concept or vision about how they can reinvest or reinvent in those areas for a higher purpose of development or sustainability.

The City of Durham has a Northeast Central Durham Livability Initiative that they have been working on for a while. Forty thousand dollars was provided to help that initiative to move forward in Durham.

Mr. David Burns asked, “Is that privately owned land?”

Mr. Westmoreland answered, “Yes, as far as I know, it is privately owned land.”

Ms. Lisa Riegel from DENR stated that it is usually privately-owned land that is an industrial site that has been abandoned.

Mr. Westmoreland continued that Triangle J COG was awarded \$31,000 for a \$91,000 project. They’re looking at land use planning and transportation development activities throughout the Triangle Region.

The Town of Fuquay-Varina is establishing what is known as a “Code Based Form Ordinance,” which looks at how they plan to develop the City in the future. Everything to be included in a code based form would be things from architectural requirements of housing to traditional neighborhood development orientation. It is a different form of a city ordinance or city development code.

The NC Eastern Region Military Growth Task Force received \$15,000 for support for a regional planner for all of the areas that are growing because of the military activities.

The Wilmington MPO received \$15,000 for transportation planning activities.

The Town of Robbinsville and Graham County proposed to develop a comprehensive master plan for the town and city.

The presentation then shifted to sustainable community activities that are being supported by federal funding. There are 27 grant opportunities that are connected to the livability sustainability initiative that the federal government is undertaking. The Community Challenge/Tiger II Grants is an element of the Tiger II grant with DOT. It was funded at \$68 million. When you apply for these grants there are a listing of criteria and your project has to support or help further the goals and principles. The respective applications are given out to the different entities of EPA, HUD and USDOT, letting them provide evaluation assistance.

HUD's Regional Sustainable Community Planning Grant program is probably the most significant grant. In 2010 HUD had its first call announcement for these products for \$100 million and they ended up awarding \$98 million. It was to look at significant efforts to improve regional planning and coordination. EPA's Sustainable Communities Building Blocks Program transforms areas of concentrated poverty and is linked together with the HUD and DOT programs. Each one of these programs now are looking at redeveloping or revitalizing neighborhoods and looking at the sustainability principles and incorporating certain factors in their grant applications.

The Regional Sustainable Community Planning Grant program was an extremely competitive program across the nation. North Carolina received two of the 47 grants that were awarded. North Carolina may be the only state that received two of the grants. Land-of-Sky Regional Council received \$1.6 million, and Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART) received \$1.6 million. Community Challenge Grants awarded \$850,000 dollars for redevelopment or neighborhood planning activities in Asheville, and Lexington received \$700,000 dollars to help with planning and development of a new multi-modal station in downtown Lexington. The Town of Spencer received \$170,000 from the CPA Grant Program, and the Cities of Salisbury and Wilmington each received funding for specific under-utilized neighborhoods.

The next steps of the Task Force include the development of a comprehensive report to the Legislature which is due October 1, 2011; the report will include known funding through existing programs within state agencies that support sustainable community development. It will reflect on departmental policies and programs and provide possible opportunities for policy changes. Collectively it will give a better profile of the state and the tools and issues that need to be worked on.

The Task Force is also working on providing technical assistance, as required by the Legislation. Mr. Westmoreland is currently chairing a sub-committee of the Task Force that is specifically focused on technical assistance. If someone requests assistance in the realm of sustainable communities from the Task Force, the sub-committee can decide how to provide direct assistance to them or provide them with resources to obtain what they need assistance with.

The Task Force's website has lots of great information about what the Task Force is doing. See http://www.onencnaturally.org/pages/SC_SustainableCommunities.html.

Mr. Knight stated that the work of Task Force is a priority for DENR. They are working hard on sustainability and trying to incorporate that in their day-to-day practices and beyond. He

introduced Lisa Riegel, Sustainability Representative, at DENR. When he is not at the Task Force meetings, she is representing DENR and also does work outside of the Task Force with other agencies, both state and federal. They look forward to working with DOT and other agencies and believes that it has been a successful collaboration so far.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis asked if the Task Force was a conduit for which they can get some of the TIGER Grants? She asked, if they did not have the Task Force, would they be positioned to accept some of the grants?

Mr. Knight responded by saying his perspective is that internally to DOT and other state agencies, they already have the ability to apply for the grants. However, the framework for the NC Sustainable Communities Task Force is really to help support those regional entities, and cities and MPO's. They have at least three agencies on the Task Force, which is DOT, Commerce and DENR. With the Regional Planning Grant Initiative, their three secretaries got together and agreed to provide up to a certain level of financial support. Because the program so closely parallels the federal model, the federal agencies are very interested in what the state agencies doing. It gives them a separator as it relates to the application process.

Ms. Riegel added that the HUD actually wants to talk to the state about the program as it's the first state to have such a program; they would like to see it replicated in other states. They have made comments in meetings referring to North Carolina's support for the grants.

Mr. Knight mentioned that Julie Hunkins, Manager for the Quality Enhancement Unit, has been a strong supporter for DOT, as have Libby Smith from the NC Department of Commerce and Joy Wayman from the NC Department of Administration .

Nina Szlosberg-Landis asked if it needed to be in this year's fiscal budget to replenish the \$250,000.

Mr. Knight stated that he was aware that there would be no funding for anything new projects though the state funding. They will carry on with the program because they have a lot of work to do without funding for now.

The Multi-Modal Committee meeting agenda items were then discussed. (See meeting minutes from the Multi-modal Committee).

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis adjourned the joint meeting at 4:30 P.M.

JH/ajp



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
GOVERNOR

EUGENE A. CONTI, JR.
SECRETARY

**North Carolina Board of Transportation
Environmental Planning and Policy Committee
Meeting Minutes for July 6, 2011**

A meeting of the Environmental Planning and Policy Committee (EPPC) was held July 6, 2011 at 3:00 PM in the EIC of the Transportation Building. Nina Szlosberg-Landis chaired the meeting. Other Board of Transportation members that attended were:

David L. Burns
Conrad Burrell

J. Gary Ciccone
Mike Fox

Andy M. Perkins
Chuck Watts

Ralph Womble

Other attendees included:

Phillip Ayscue
Victor Barbour
Greg Burns
Helen Chaney
Cheryl Hannah
Joey Hopkins
Jim Humphrey

Julie Hunkins
Don Lee
Julia Merchant
Mike Mills
Angela Person
Ruth Petersen
Lori Ruth

Amy Simes
John Sullivan
Greg Thorpe
Kumar Trivedi
Lexie Wolf

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis called the meeting to order at 3:00 PM and accepted a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the May 2011 committee meeting. The minutes were approved as presented.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis began by letting everyone know that today's discussion was an update and extension of the conversation conducted earlier in the year. Their discussion today dovetails other conversations from meetings held that day. They have talked about Complete Streets, bike and pedestrian funding and creative corridors in Winston-Salem. All of these things could fall under the big umbrella of social health. It was deemed appropriate that their discussion today would be about transportation, health and how a better intersection between the two can be created. Dr. Ruth Petersen is an expert on the topic and has been working with DOT and other colleagues on trying to make progress.

Ms. Peterson gave a brief background on health impact of the built environment. She also discussed the review of policy issues and potential solutions from the policy analysis conducted with the Healthy Environments Collaborative and resulting identified issues and potential solutions. The first background piece discussed was why public health care is so much about

what people do when thinking about built environments. “Built environments” is a term that means human-made surroundings that provide the setting for human activity, ranging in scale from building to neighborhoods and cities. It basically means making physical activity an easy choice and improving access to physical activity and multi-modal transportation.

The NC Department of Health and Human Services’ Division of Public Health (DPH) is trying to get people in the State of North Carolina to understand that they need to exercise 150 minutes a week. It can be ten minutes a day for six days and a hard workout on the seventh day, or 30 minutes a day for 5 days. It is important to just get your exercise in each week. Children and adolescents need 60 minutes of physical activity a day. This is why it’s important for the Division of Public Health to think outside of the box and talk to schools and people in the NC Department of Public Instruction about how to get people motivated to exercise. The more physically activity you do, the better your benefits will be.

From the Chronic Disease and Injury Division for the State of North Carolina, overweight/obesity, Type II diabetes, heart disease, stroke, hypertension, colon and breast cancers are things related to not getting enough physical activity. Two thirds of adults and one third of children in North Carolina are overweight or obese. Ten percent of North Carolinians have diabetes, which many of those cases are undiagnosed. North Carolina has the 17th highest rate of diabetes in the country. That is partially related to the two thirds of adults who are overweight and obese. Heart disease is the leading cause of death in that State and the highest prevalence rate of strokes in the country. Hypertension is very depressing when you look at it by income level of households. Looking at household levels where income is \$15,000 a year or less, 40% of those adults have hypertension. Looking at income levels where household levels are over \$75,000 a year, around 20% have hypertension. The disparity between the low- and high-income families and hypertension is very alarming because hypertension leads to the stroke rate and that also leads to the other issues mentioned.

Inactivity is strongly links to all the diseases. If you don’t smoke, you eat your five fruits and vegetables every day, you get lots of sleep and you don’t use a lot of alcohol, that would be great, but if you still do not get enough exercise, inactivity will still be responsible to leading to the bad outcomes. The more facilities available and destinations close by, the more people will walk. People who live within walking distance of trails, parks or stores report a higher walking percentage than those who don’t. If people support these active living parameters, there can be two more walker/bike trips per person, per week. That can prevent up to 1.7 pounds of weight gain per year and a 35 percent lower risk of obesity in that community. This may sound like a lot, but if you don’t do anything, people will continue to gain more weight or not stay at the weight that they are now. If you have active living built into the community, it will increase the total minutes of physical activity by up to 40% and increase life expectancy.

Trips that begin and end with small physical activity will pay off in the long run. The example used was the Charlotte Light Rail system. People were amazed at the impact documented, because it takes twelve minutes to walk from your house to the light rail station and then to the job. Twenty minutes to and from work will eventually get 150 minutes of exercise that you need every week. That will eventually help you lose the 1.7 pounds of weight, which will help with obesity. Healthcare figures will go down and businesses will want to move into the area being

that it will be an area with a healthy workforce. The environment will be beautiful from not burning fossil fuels that result in harmful emissions. People who use public transportation for any reason are less likely to be sedentary or obese than adults who do not use public transportation. According to a study of obesity-related medical costs, the extra walking related to transit use saved \$5,500 per person in 2007.

The Healthy Environments Collaboration (HEC) began in 2006 and consists of a group of interested people from the NC Departments of Transportation, Commerce, Environment and Natural Resources, and Health and Human Services. They are focused on how to integrate and influence interdepartmental efforts to improve the health of North Carolina's people, environments and economy. It is a small group motivated to do the right thing with building bridges and partnerships. Since 2006, the HEC has morphed into a dynamic and exciting effort that has spread through organizations. Payoff is starting to show from the hard efforts, which is the policy analysis. Thinking about how state policy is shaped to improve North Carolina's infrastructure, you will notice that all of the departments and divisions do it in a different way and are sometimes in conflict with one another. The policy analysis was created with the HEC group to understand the state policy landscape that shapes built environment for physical activity in the state.

Lexie Wolf went through the policies with a team that included consultants. There were 374 policies found in DHHS, DOT, Commerce and DENR that directly or indirectly influenced the built environment. Interviews were also conducted with the state and local agencies to get their opinions on the policies. Fourteen people were interviewed that were either state leaders or staff, and six of the fourteen were from DOT. There were nine municipal teams that were also interviewed. They came up with 190 policy issues from the policy analysis. One of the outputs was a report that looked at what the top policy issues really were. They needed to know what policy issues needed to be addressed for state agencies to be able to improve infrastructure around physical activity. The second was a report listing potential solutions to the policy issues. Ms. Petersen disclosed that the potential solutions report is more of a range of solutions and not answers; it represents thoughts about potential answers and they have not been vetted for feasibility.

There were six themes that came from the policy issues and potential solutions. One of the issues was the interagency data collection and sharing. North Carolina agencies need to work better together to collect and share data on active transportation infrastructure. North Carolina agencies need methods and indicators to assess economic and other impacts of active transportation. When there is a plan or project that improves connectivity or multi-modal access, such as Complete Streets, how can DOT and DPH assess the data regarding health and economic impacts? Until we can demonstrate the benefits of health and active transportation on the economy, there will be a harder time leveraging more federal and other types funding. One of the ideas was to amend select programs and processes, such as Complete Streets or bike and pedestrian plans, to include data collection that will be helpful to everyone. This would contribute to the infrastructure inventory that could be used to leverage funds to be diverted to the places in most need.

Other ideas were to have state and local collaborations to include baseline community health metrics in comprehensive, long-range transportation plans. The idea was to have state and local collaborations develop requirements for municipalities, RPOs, and MPOs to inventory and share bike and pedestrian facility data.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis stated that they are right in the middle of the implementation guidelines for Complete Streets. She asked what could be done as part of the that implementation guidance to help get to a solution.

Ms. Peterson stated that her department has central reporting data systems, with the state's server health statistics, that run out of the Division of Public Health, and they could capture all the data they need and reframe it out to different stakeholders based on communication that is appropriate. They also have a huge GIS mapping facility.

Ms. Helen Chaney of the NCDOT Bike and Pedestrian mentioned that they are working on a pilot project to provide bicycle and pedestrian access to bus transit in Durham. They selected three corridors and have used GIS and scoped out their study area.

Ms. Peterson stated that the Division of Public Health has been working on training people in the local health departments about what a health impact assessment is and how you actually measure those changes in the community. You have to figure out what is important in the community, which means you have to access what the problems are first.

Mr. Chuck Watts commented that in terms of the MPO's and RPO's, they don't even have comprehensive transportation. It is important for the locals to determine what they need. In environments where there is regional transit planning, like in Charlotte or the Triangle, it seems as though assessing public health would be beneficial.

Ms. Peterson continued with stating that state funding is limited. Fuel tax revenues are going down and you end getting large-scale projects that compete with other roadway projects. They should be working together to prioritize in a way that is depending on the data. Solutions were to revisit the state's Powell Bill - and amend the rules about resilience on the diminishing gas tax revenue and encourage local expenditures on projects.

The third theme is regulatory policy. There is a complex state regulatory landscape for land use and transportation planning, which put smaller and lower capacity local governments at a disadvantage.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis stated that in another meeting she learned that the larger urban communities generally get 50/50 split, but the Bicycle and Pedestrian Division will work with smaller communities and get it down to 80/20 on the pedestrian projects. This should be explored and shared so that smaller communities who want to participate will have options.

Ms. Peterson stated that in the health department world where they distribute money out through the state, a discussion goes on about whether the big counties with a larger population get more money than the smaller counties with smaller populations but higher needs. The North Carolina

Department of Transportation recommends ten feet of greenways, but DENR recommends 6 to 8 feet for greenways to protect environmental protection in buffer zones. A potential solution would be to have the HEC member agencies develop capacity of the local clients and grant recipients so they can request and contract for multimodal transportation improvements, as well as standardize multimodal transportation designs throughout the agencies. North Carolina is similar to about half the states in that they do not require municipal land use plans. Complete Streets may be difficult to implement in municipalities lacking updated land use plans.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis stated that she thought the Transportation Planning Act, that was passed in 2004, requires communities to have a land-use plan if they are going to have technical assistance from DOT.

Ms. Peterson stated that the Transportation Planning Act doesn't tell the municipalities the kind of plan they have, but they do have to have a plan. If they don't have a plan, then they don't get technical assistance from DOT.

Solutions recommended from the policy interviews were to amend or enact new rules requiring land use planning or land development plans with minimal standards as a pre co-requisite for technical assistance for transportation planning. The recommendation also included enacting a rule requiring an effective land use planning and implementation as a prerequisite to NCDOT's commitment to Complete Streets planning for that locality. Other ideas include using the criterion of having an enacted land use plan to prioritize TIP projects; incentivize land use planning through the bicycle and pedestrian planning grant program or other programs; and a collaboration between with NCDOT, DENR and Commerce's Community Planning Division to develop an integrated planning services for municipalities.

Mr. Watts stated that is not whether a land use plan is good or bad, it is whether it can be implemented. A lot of times you will have land use plans, and when a developer comes in and wants something different, then it doesn't really matter.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis commented that there is a "crack in the door" about having land-use planning as part of the scoring process.

Mr. Watts commented that it helps to zoom out from a planning perspective. A lot of times they are reacting to local land use planning if a community decides to let a thousand residential homes be built in the outskirts of town. Years down the road, something would have to be built to improve the two-lane country road that services that area. Before imposing the burden and being rewarded with a four-lane road, there should be some sort of planning to help them deal with the road in the future.

Ms. Peterson stated that some of the issues with transportation planning is that Transportation Divisions across the state could encourage locals to engage in more bike and pedestrian planning and work with them on local funding matches for bike and pedestrian projects for small municipalities where providing those matches is a hardship.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis suggested going on a “road diet.” There was a great “road diet” in Charlotte and there are a number of Complete Streets. The idea needs to be taken to the MPO’s and RPO’s and show them that it doesn’t cost a lot of money to do things and become proactive on educating members of the TAC’s and the TCC’s.

Ms. Peterson added that it is not just the people that Ms. Szlosberg-Landis mentioned, but also the community members. The community members need to understand that it is beneficial for them to have their town nicer than what it looks like now. There were a lot of issues in the transportation planning theme. One is that no federal or state authority exists requiring active transportation improvements when developing or renovating built environments or successful implementation of Complete Streets. This will require guidelines that span DOT functions and geographic areas. How might funding and permit regulations link to traditional design standards and be adjusted to support Complete Streets was an issue that kept coming up. Solutions were to amend the next version of Prioritization 2.0 to enhance multimodal considerations and develop eligibility and selection criteria for multimodal demonstration projects.

Other potential solutions are to develop incentives for planners and engineers to embrace multimodal planning and project designs, enact rules that hold engineers and Transportation Division leadership accountable to implementing multimodal planning and design and developing Complete Streets guidelines that ensure that all staff incorporate multimodal solutions when identified as a need by the community. The community needs to have the opportunity to identify this as a need and figure out how to find a course of action. The new standard would be that all streets, unless excluded by a certain definition, will be Complete Streets. The NC Departments of Environment and Natural Resources, DOT, Commerce and can learn to speak the language from the health perspective. When you listen to commerce and economic development people talking about the Main Street Initiative and having nicer streets for people to walk, shop and look at businesses, everyone can participate to help the communities figure out how to move their Complete Streets onto the priority list.

Opportunities and barriers to making healthy choices are created by the natural and built environment. Therefore, health is impacted by policies from many government agencies, as well as the private sector. Standard impact assessments (such as environmental assessments and/or Community Impact Assessments (CIA)) do not include health indicators such as “physical activity.” The challenge is to figure out how the environmental assessment or the CIA could start to include the health impact indicators. From a health impact standpoint, when you think about the mitigation project, what’s interesting is that they can have either a good side or a bad side. A positive impact example is that an Ecosystem Enhancement Program mitigation project could be coordinated with a greenway project. A negative impact example could be a park built to offset a highway expansion and is built too close to the highway for healthy air quality. There has to be a way to make health part of the equation when planning for the mitigation projects.

Another solution is that DOT could pilot incorporating health impact assessment methods in CIA’s for project studies and require the assessment of health-related impacts in the description of “Anticipated Health Impacts” (e.g. physical activity opportunities) whenever design variances are required.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis mentioned that the pilot project in Charlotte would be a good example of a healthy environment collaborative pilot project.

Ms. Lexie Wolf mentioned that the Blue Ridge Corridor pilot project in Raleigh is going on now that is very collaborative and will address health as a part of its planning process.

Ms. Peterson continued with other solutions for assessing health impacts. A solution was to include the health perspective within key DOT guidance documents, such as is the Complete Streets Implementation Guidelines, the 2040 plan and the Sustainability Blueprint. Other solutions suggest providing local transportation professionals with resources that help them link their work to the impact on public health.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis mentioned that the Complete Streets Implementation Guidelines are being worked on now. She suggested that Ms. Peterson meet with Victor Barbour and Terry Gibson to discuss how the guidelines would look since there is a concrete timeline.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis suggested having staff look at the issues and recommendations and come back with recommendations about how to better integrate health considerations into transportation decision-making.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis also mentioned that there is work that came from the Bicycle and Pedestrian summit earlier this Spring that can be “dove-tailed” with some of those initiatives already committed to that are going to help with other issues.

Mr. Hopkins mentioned that they are in the middle of their public comment period for the first four chapters of the Complete Streets Guidelines and would love to have Public Health’s comments. The remainder of the guidelines are scheduled to be finished later in the Fall. It can be viewed at www.nccompletestreets.com.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis suggested that two months was a reasonable time for staff to come back to the EPPC with some doable recommendations.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis adjourned the meeting at 4:00 P.M.

JH/ajp



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

BEVERLY EAVES PERDUE
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EUGENE A. CONTI, JR.
SECRETARY

**North Carolina Board of Transportation
Environmental Planning and Policy Committee
Meeting Minutes for September 7, 2011**

A meeting of the Environmental Planning and Policy Committee (EPPC) was held September 7, 2011 at 10:00 A.M. in the EIC of the Transportation Building. Nina Szlosberg-Landis chaired the meeting. Other Board of Transportation members that attended were:

David L. Burns
J. Gary Ciccone

Andy M. Perk
Chuck Watts

Other attendees included:

Phillip Ayscue
Daniel Bagley
Victor Barbour
Jay Bennett
Steve Bevington
Wally Bowman
Greg Burns
Heather Causey
Helen Chaney

Alena R. Cook
Steve Gurganus
Catherine Harr
Jim Humphrey
Drew Joyner
Julian Merchant
Ruth Petersen
Amy Simes
John Sullivan

Jay Swain
Greg Thorpe
Kumar Trivedi
Lexie Wolf
Julie Hunkins

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis called the meeting to order at 10:00 A.M. and accepted a motion to approve the meeting minutes from the July 2011 committee meeting. The minutes were approved as presented.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis stated that today's discussion is about health and transportation. Everyone is talking about the built environment and its connectivity and how to get these more aligned. What can we do to create this further alignment? Ms. Szlosberg turned the floor over to Julie Hunkins.

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Ms. Hunkins began by recalling Ms. Petersen's presentation in July about the Healthy Environment Collaborative and some of work being done in regards to policy review. There were key issues and recommendations found that should be considered in order to have more positive health outcomes related to transportation. Ms. Hunkins, along with NC Department of Transportation (DOT) and NC Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), were asked to review the issues that came up in the policy review and to develop viable recommendations to implement in the DOT.

Ms. Hunkins points out that the real heart of the matter is the potential for transportation to positively or negatively affect public health outcomes. Today's discussion will help provide context about health in a built environment while presenting those policy issues and recommendations previously mentioned.

The DOT is about moving people and goods. The reason the DOT does this is to improve the quality of life in our communities and environment. Active transportation includes biking and walking, but transit is also considered active transportation since one must walk to and from it. In order to have active transportation, infrastructure must be in place, such as sidewalks and bike facilities.

Communities with well-connected land use can generate two more walking/biking trips per person per week, which can help prevent weight gain of about 1.7 pounds per year and potentially increase life expectancy by four years. If the land use is there and in proximity to them, people will more likely use the infrastructure. A recent survey said that 60% of the polled people would take advantage of active transportation if the infrastructure were available. A lot of people have to bike or walk in order to use public transportation; therefore, public transportation can be considered a form of "active" transportation. Walking to and from public transportation helps create more minutes of activity within people's daily lives. The recommended amount is 150 minutes of activity per week.

The Healthy Environments Collaborative (HEC) started in 2006. Recently the HEC and DHHS received a grant from Center for Disease Control to conduct a policy analysis (specifically around health and the built environment). The goal was to help create healthy environments in communities. Four agencies came together -- NC Department of Commerce, NC Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR), DHHS, and DOT -- to work on identify ways to improve the overall environment in North Carolina. That includes the natural environment, the economy of the state, and the communities in which we live. Through the CDC grant, DHHS conducted a policy analysis of different stakeholders (local and state agencies) to discover what policies or processes impede or help create positive health outcomes. The result was 190 policy problem statements. An inventory was conducted as well which resulted in 374 policies that have the potential to either positively or negatively affect public health.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis asks for an example on the inventory side of policy. Dr. Ruth Petersen states that greenways are one example. DOT and DENR have their different descriptions about what constitutes a bikeway and different design standards. What are

the parameters around which you build that greenway? Ms. Petersen then asks Ms. Lexie Wolf, DHHS, if she has another example.

Ms. Wolf states that the policy inventory contains state policies that directly or indirectly impact the ability of our built environment to support physical activity. The analysis examines policy gaps, barriers and conflicts within departments. For example the analysis examines Department of Commerce policies governing the use of Community Development Block Grant funds and whether or not they can be used for infrastructure that supports physical activity such as sidewalks. Another example would be an examination of DENR's policies around building greenways near riparian buffers and whether they conflict with DOT's policy guidelines for greenway widths.

Ms. Hunkins mentions cost sharing for sidewalks.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that when you do a highway project it's 80/20, typically. She asks about 50/50. 80/20 applies to municipalities with populations under 10,000 where new sidewalks are to be added. 50/50 applies to municipalities over 100,000 in population.

Ms. Hunkins points out that such cost sharing can be burdensome for smaller communities, even with a 80/20 participation split.

She continues her discussion on overarching policy themes. There are six of these policy themes. The first one has to do with data collection and sharing. There is a lack of data on health and its interaction with the built environment. In addition, sharing between different state agencies or between local and state agencies is minimal. There also appears to be a lack of performance measurement and tracking over time so we can assess that data and evaluate trends.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis asks if having metrics also helps us on health issues. For example, if we can demonstrate that the department's fiscal investments in infrastructure are resulting in more positive public health outcomes, and in turn that has a positive effect on the Medicaid budget and insurance, etc., it makes it clear that there is value in our infrastructure investment. Without data, we cannot make that case.

Ms. Hunkins continues stating that funding is an issue as well – and that involves funding transportation infrastructure other than just highways. The interviews conducted as part of the policy analysis indicates there is insufficient funding for certain kinds of transportation.

There are also issues with land use planning -- there are not consistent land use planning standards throughout the state which causes a lot of problems with providing multimodal options. There are opportunities here that can help with long range comprehensive transportation planning. The lack of long-range, integrated land use and transportation planning will make the implementation of the Complete Streets policy more challenging. The more detailing of land development plans on the local level, the more opportunities for success for Complete Street implementation.

For transportation planning, there are opportunities to better integrate bicycle and pedestrian planning into the overall transportation planning process.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that the Board approves long-range transportation plans as a part of the Board agenda.

Ms. Hunkins states that NCDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Division (BPD) is working on the development of bicycle and pedestrian plans across the State. Mr. Trivedi states that every year, the Division allocates funding to municipalities to complete pedestrian or bicycle plans.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that the BPD started with an allocation of \$250,000, and Kumar Trivedi states that the current funding amount is \$400,000. Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that there are still many people who want these grants.

Mr. Perkins states that the Department's goal is to teach communities to have at least a plan for bikes and pedestrians, to create connectivity between schools, centers of activity, etc. A healthy habit would be instead of driving a car, walk or bike where you want to go.

Ms. Hunkins continues the discussion on transportation planning. There are things that can be done in terms of the Divisions, such as helping to educate about and support Complete Streets implementation, as well as understanding communities' needs, helping them understand what funding opportunities are available, how to create priorities within their communities, etc.

Next, she mentions the need to assess the impact of policy and projects on health. Communities must take interest in the health issues in their communities and express an interest that they want to change the status quo.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis asks where North Carolina ranks within the 50 states.

Ms. Petersen states that North Carolina is 35th. Within the geographical location in the southeast U.S., NC is in the worst area for health status. Other things that affect this are poverty level, education level, and lots of dietary issues.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis asks who is last.

Ms. Petersen states that it's Mississippi, Louisiana, or Alabama. She also states that Washington State is usually at the top. Oregon is also at the top, along with Colorado and Utah.

Ms. Hunkins continues stating that potential ideas and recommendations came from the policy review. The group that helped review these ideas was Steve Gurganus, Steve Bevington, Helen Chaney, Lexie Wolf, Kumar Trivedi, Harrison Marshall, Ruth Petersen, Leigh Lane, and Jim Emery.

Several meetings were spent going through the issues and looking at ideas that had already been generated. The group also looked at things within the NCDOT's control or influence, as well as where opportunities are available.

The first recommendation is an opportunity to have a public health component within the department's Sustainability Blueprint. This can be accomplished through considering public health outcomes as a part of transportation decision making. The current thought is that health should be integrated into the Blueprint's aspirational goals, strategies and activities. Also there is a need to communicate to staff the relationship between transportation and public health. There is currently a lack of understanding about how the decisions the state makes affect chronic disease.

The second recommendation is about comprehensive transportation planning. Where communities have identified health issues and where data is available, the state can provide some guidance within the comprehensive transportation planning process as to how to best integrate health considerations into their decision-making. This will make sure that the health interests/goals of these communities can be translated into their community vision and objectives. There is also an opportunity for data collection and sharing. The other piece to have minimum land development standards; the development of these standards is already underway as part of the Integration Project. The components that are being considered include: documenting and planning existing land use, documenting key natural and environmental issues that are in the area, and identifying future growth areas (including need for water and sewer infrastructure). NCDOT and local planners need to know how and where those communities want to grow in order to provide transportation options that can support stated goals.

The third recommendation has to do with Complete Streets. Ms. Hunkins states that a DOT-DHHS group reviewed the comments on implementation guidance and Complete Streets planning and design guidelines to better integrate public health considerations into the guidance. Once the Complete Streets guidance is complete, there will be an opportunity to talk about how effective implementation this policy and guidelines can result in more positive health outcomes. Next, the Department can leverage their relationship with the NC Department of Commerce to reach out to regional planners to help advocate better integration of transportation and land use, especially in small towns across the state. The Transportation Divisions will play a key role in the effective implementation of Complete Streets.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis asks if the state has asked MPO's and RPO's to give feedback on the Complete Streets guidance.

Mr. Bennett states that yes - everybody sent in information. A lot of the information has to do with the planning aspects. It has to evolve from more than just transportation projects - planning needs to consider site development and community projects.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that one of the things that can happen from this recommendation (with the feedback from MPO's and RPO'S) is that information could be transformed in presentations in RPO's and TAC's. These presentations could discuss what the public health lense is in this environment.

Mr. Perkins states that Complete Streets is a major investment. It was designed to beautify communities and provide new features so people can get around the community.

Parks, trails, etc. can be planned because of this investment and reduce the dependency on automobiles. The Divisions have been responsive to making these commitments along with a lot of stakeholders. A lot of the components are currently being effectively utilized.

Mr. Bennett states that the issue is making sure people are aware of this.

Mr. Perkins states that people are aware of this but, what we need to do is get the city, county, city planners, and city managers thinking about it from a development and a financial point of view.

Ms. Hunkins continues stating that the third recommendation will also educate communities and local officials about Complete Streets benefits and opportunities.

The fourth recommendation is the project development process. Evaluating the relevant elements within the community impacts assessment is important in making sure elements of health/physical activity/multi-modalism are there; it'll also be important to address this information within the context of planning documents. Also, there is an opportunity to better understand what's federally required through the NEPA/SEPA process and note best practices being performed by other states and how it might help us.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that it would seem that the healthier the project, the easier the NEPA/SEPA requirements.

Ms. Hunkins continues with the fifth recommendation, which is the opportunity to better collaborate with agencies. For example, enhanced the communication between DOT and DENR (regarding greenway design and permitting) needs to be developed. Already work between these agencies has begun to help create consistency. Also, DENR's trail program was reviewed to establish more opportunities for the state to collaborate.

Mr. Wally Bowman mentions that one of the issues is parks and their hours of service. DOT has offered to provide more parking spaces for users (instead of parking on the streets and in front of people's houses); however, DENR is unable to enforce this area with security and cleanup. People want to go to the park earlier than the hours of operation. DENR does not have the staff in order to allow this consideration.

Ms. Hunkins also states that a part of this fifth recommendation is better coordination with local, state, and other entities to provide transit for the disabled, elderly, and low-income/welfare recipients. The effective use of existing federal and state funding to maximize transit services is an issue that a group of stakeholders is working on. It includes looking at increased leveraging of Federal Transit Administration and Medicaid funding which are administered by NCDOT and DHHS, respectively.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that this recommendation fits well with the Governor's efforts around streamlining, consolidation, and efficiency.

Ms. Hunkins continues stating that the next phase is to develop methods and indicators to assess economic and health impacts of active transportation, similar to the study that was performed several years ago at the Outer Banks in Dare County. The study showed that

the provision of bicycle facilities in this areas resulted in a very positive economic impact. Another example is the positive impact on physical health that occurred following the opening of the light rail Lynx line in Charlotte. More of these kinds of studies would provide the state with better information and data to support the direct and cascading economic and health benefits of certain types of infrastructure investments.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that in regards to policies, there are not many opportunities to do anything big. A lot of steps are being proposed and utilized in the context of things that are already happening.

Ms. Hunkins states that when these recommendations were developed and prioritize, the group considered the context of current funding, the political environment, and the opportunities to leverage existing resources, funding and collaborative partnerships.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis asks what the Board needs to do in regards to the recommendations and topics discussed.

Ms. Hunkins states that her group has the internal support to move forward on these recommendations but would like to come back and report to the Committee in roughly six months to update them on the progress and to get comments and suggestions on the path forward.

Mr. Perkins says to look at ways to evaluate how well something does. For example, a trail created around a campus has workers who use it daily and internally measure how much weight they lose. We need to look at these success stories. How do people decide to take on this activity? It's because the state made it conducive with the landscaping and the environment. We need to find ways of measuring these things. Another attendee states that it is also important to look at the activity benefits that do not translate into weight loss.

Ms. Szlosberg-Landis states that it would be beneficial to have a snapshot of what's helping on the public health and transportation side. The presentation should show what is happening nationally and in other states to put these issues into context.

Mr. Steve Bevington states there are opportunities when looking at the long range plan, such as potentially looking at where the state can better leverage where these recommendations are applied on the sub-regional tier. The point is to make it tangible for people to see. Another example would be to look at school infrastructure, which is not coordinated with transportation infrastructure. One option might be to provide financial incentives to the people who plan and develop projects with the interconnectivity of different modes – and are able to reduce vehicle trips as well as convert vehicle trips to pedestrian trips.

Ms. Nina Szlosberg-Landis adjourned the joint meeting at 11:05 A.M.

JH/hgc