

INFORMATION ITEM #12

**Winston-Salem Urban Area Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Advisory Committee
Action Request**

Meeting Date: March 18, 2021 **Agenda Item Number:** 12

Action Requested: Review of 2021 Federal Certification Report

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION: **Attachments:** Yes X No

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Certification Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

On December 2-3, 2020, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted the certification review of the transportation planning process for the Winston-Salem urbanized area.

The overall conclusion of the Certification Review is that the planning process for the Winston-Salem MPO complies with the spirit and intent of Federal metropolitan transportation planning laws and regulations under 23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303. The planning process at the Winston-Salem MPO is a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive process and reflects a significant professional commitment to deliver quality in transportation planning.

TAC Vote: Motion by: _____ **Second by:** _____

Vote: For _____ **Against** _____



U.S. Department
of Transportation
**Federal Highway
Administration**

North Carolina Division

February 5, 2021

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In Reply Refer To:
HDA-NC

The Honorable Mayor Mike Horn
Mayor of Lewisville, TAC Chairman
Winston-Salem Metropolitan Planning Organization
6510 Shallowford Rd
Lewisville, NC 27023

Subject: Winston-Salem MPO Federal Certification Review

Dear Mayor Horn:

This letter notifies you that the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) jointly certify the planning process for the Winston-Salem MPO Transportation Management Area (TMA). This certification is based on the findings from the Federal Certification Review conducted on December 2-3, 2020.

The overall conclusion of the Certification Review is that the planning process for the Winston-Salem MPO complies with the spirit and intent of Federal metropolitan transportation planning laws and regulations under 23 USC 134 and 49 USC 5303. The planning process at the Winston-Salem MPO is a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive process and reflects a significant professional commitment to deliver quality in transportation planning.

We would like to thank the MPO staff for their time and assistance in planning and conducting the review. Enclosed is a report that documents the results of this review and offers 7 recommendations and 2 commendations for continuing quality improvements and enhancements to the planning process. This report has been transmitted concurrently to the MPO, WSTA and NCDOT. As a final step of the Certification Review process, we offer to present these findings to the Winston-Salem MPO Transportation Advisory Committee and other committees, at your discretion.

If you have any questions regarding the Certification Review process, the Certification action, and/or the enclosed report, please direct them to either Suzette Morales, Community Planner of the FHWA NC Division, at (919) 747-7351 or Parris Orr, Community Planner of the FTA Region 4, at (404) 865-5617.

Sincerely,

For John F. Sullivan, III, P.E.
Division Administrator

Enclosure: WSMPO Certification Review Report

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U.S. Department
of Transportation

Transportation Management Area Planning Certification Review

Federal Highway
Administration

Federal Transit
Administration

Winston-Salem Transportation Management Area



FINAL REPORT
February 5, 2021





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1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On December 2-3, 2020, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) conducted the certification review of the transportation planning process for the Winston-Salem urbanized area. FHWA and FTA are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process for each urbanized area over 200,000 in population at least every four years to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements.

1.1 Previous Findings and Disposition

The first certification review for the Winston-Salem urbanized area was conducted in 2004. This is the fifth Certification review. The last certification review was completed in 2016. The 2016 Certification Review findings and their disposition are summarized as follows.

Finding	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations	Disposition
Planning Factors	Recommendation	It is recommended that the MPO incorporate the two newest planning factors into the next MTP update.	The MPO’s 2045 MTP update (November 2020), incorporates these factors
Performance Measures	Recommendation	It is recommended that the MPO develop plans and a timetable for expanding incorporation of performance measures into the overall planning process.	The MPO’s 2045 MTP update (November 2020), incorporates performance measures and these measures are reviewed as needed by MPO staff and its Board in cooperation with NCDOT.
Freight Planning	Recommendation	It is recommended that operators of freight be invited to join the TCC	This recommendation continues.



Freight Planning	Recommendation	It is recommended that the MPO work to more fully involve the freight community in the planning process.	This recommendation continues.
Congestion Management	Recommendation	It is recommended that the MPO update their CMP prior to the next certification review, and time the update such that it can incorporate the applicable performance measures published in the final rule.	The CMP was updated alongside the MTP and incorporated in the 2045 MTP update

1.2 Summary of Current Findings

The current review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Winston-Salem area meets Federal planning requirements.

As a result of this review, FHWA and FTA are certifying the transportation planning process conducted by North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT), Winston-Salem Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Winston-Salem Transit Authority (WSTA). There are recommendations in this report that warrant close attention and follow-up, as well as areas that MPO is performing very well in that are to be commended. Details of the certification findings for each of the above items are contained in this report.

Review Area	Finding	Action	Corrective Actions/ Recommendations/ Commendations	Resolution Due Date
MPO Structure and Agreements 23 U.S.C. 134(d) 23 CFR 450.314(a)	Roles and responsibilities of new TAC members need to be defined	Recommendation	MPO development of a standard orientation for new TAC members.	By September 2022
Unified Planning Work Program 23 CFR 450.308	Self-certification checklist does not include the two most recent planning factors	Recommendation	MPO update its Self-Certification checklist, in coordination with NCDOT, to account for the new planning factors.	By the next Certification Review
Metropolitan Transportation Plan 23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h)&(i) 23 CFR 450.324	No measures indicating that goals and objectives listed in the MTP are progressing or being met.	Recommendation	MPO's MTP include measures of effectiveness designed to correspond to accomplishment of mission goals and objectives and achievement of desired results.	By next MTP update
Transit Planning 49 U.S.C. 5303 23 U.S.C. 134 23 CFR 450.314	FTA obligated funding not well defined	Recommendation	Include FTA obligated funding for all public transit agencies in the annual listing of projects.	By the next Certification Review



Public Participation 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(6) 23 CFR 450.316 & 450.326(b)	Extensive use of public involvement techniques.	Commendation	None	None
Civil Rights Title VI Civil Rights Act, 23 U.S.C. 324, Age Discrimination Act, Sec. 504 Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act	1. Addressing EJ as it #1 Goal/Objective. 2. Innovative efforts to engage EJ populations in the development of its Pedestrian Master plan through interactive mapping to capture public comments and target EJ populations where their participation is found to be underrepresented.	Commendations	None	None
Civil Rights Title VI Civil Rights Act, 23 U.S.C. 324, Age Discrimination Act, Sec. 504 Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act	Needs a comparative EJ analysis	Recommendation	MPO conduct an EJ analysis that provides for a comparison between MLI and non-MLI populations by disaggregating non-MLI census block groups from MLI block groups. We also encourage the MPO to consider additional analyses based on data that the MPO already captures (safety, congestion, etc.).	By next the Certification Review
Freight 23 U.S.C. 134(h) 23 CFR 450.306	Minimal freight participation in the planning process	Recommendation	MPO fully involve the freight community in the planning process, including participation in the TCC and TAC.	By the next Certification Review
Environmental Mitigation/Planning Environmental Linkage 23 U.S.C. 134(i)(2)(D) 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) 23 U.S.C. 168 Appx. A 23 CFR Part 450	Minimal environmental features identification and lack of discussions of potential project impacts and mitigation in the MTP	Recommendation	MPO coordinate with relevant stakeholder agencies and discuss the potential types of environmental mitigation activities and areas that may have the greatest potential to restore, maintain, and/or enhance environmental amenities. The discussion should consider policies, programs, or strategies; involve the Federal and State environmental regulatory agencies; and document the results of such discussions as part of the MTP	By the next Certification Review



U.S. Department of Transportation
Federal Highway Administration
Federal Transit Administration



2.0 INTRODUCTION

2.1 Background

Pursuant to 23 U.S.C. 134(k) and 49 U.S.C. 5303(k), the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process in Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years. A TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau, with a population of over 200,000. After the 2010 Census, the Secretary of Transportation designated 183 TMAs – 179 urbanized areas over 200,000 in population plus four urbanized areas that received special designation. In general, the reviews consist of three primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning products (in advance of and during the site visit), and preparation of a Certification Review Report that summarizes the review and offers findings. The reviews focus on compliance with Federal regulations, challenges, successes, and experiences of the cooperative relationship between the MPO(s), the State DOT(s), and public transportation operator(s) in the conduct of the metropolitan transportation planning process. Joint FTA/FHWA Certification Review guidelines provide agency field reviewers with latitude and flexibility to tailor the review to reflect regional issues and needs. As a consequence, the scope and depth of the Certification Review reports will vary significantly.

The Certification Review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. Other activities provide opportunities for this type of review and comment, including Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) approval, the MTP, metropolitan and statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) findings, air-quality (AQ) conformity determinations (in nonattainment and maintenance areas), as well as a range of other formal and less formal contact provide both FHWA/FTA an opportunity to comment on the planning process. The results of these other processes are considered in the Certification Review process.

While the Certification Review report itself may not fully document those many intermediate and ongoing checkpoints, the “findings” of Certification Review are, in fact, based upon the cumulative findings of the entire review effort.

The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Federal reviewers prepare Certification Reports to document the results of the review process. The reports and final actions are the joint responsibility of the appropriate FHWA and FTA field offices, and their content will vary to reflect the planning process reviewed, whether or not they relate explicitly to formal “findings” of the review.

To encourage public understanding and input, FHWA/FTA will continue to improve the clarity of the Certification Review reports.



2.2 Purpose and Objective

Since the enactment of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) of 1991, the FHWA and FTA, are required to jointly review and evaluate the transportation planning process in all urbanized areas over 200,000 population to determine if the process meets the Federal planning requirements in 23 U.S.C. 134, 40 U.S.C. 5303, and 23 CFR 450. The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), extended the minimum allowable frequency of certification reviews to at least every four years.

The Winston-Salem Metropolitan Planning Organization is the designated MPO for the Winston-Salem urbanized area. North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) is the responsible State agency and WSTA is the responsible public transportation operator. Members of the Winston-Salem MPO consist of the jurisdictions of Davidson County, Davie County, Forsyth County, Stokes County, Town of Bermuda Run, Town of Bethania, Village of Clemmons, Town of Kernersville, Town of Lewisville, Town of Midway, Town of Rural Hall, Village of Tobaccoville, Town of Wallburg, and the City of Winston-Salem and include NCDOT Board of Transportation and WSTA. The Winston-Salem Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) includes the geographic area of all the aforementioned cities, towns and counties with the City of Winston-Salem as the largest population center.

Certification of the planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in such areas. The certification review is also an opportunity to provide assistance on new programs and to enhance the ability of the metropolitan transportation planning process to provide decision makers with the knowledge they need to make well-informed capital and operating investment decisions.

3.0 SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Review Process

This report details the fifth review of this MPO. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic this risk-based review, conducted in December 2020, consisted of a formal “virtual” on-site visit held via Microsoft Teams, a 30-day public comment review period, a virtual public meeting, and an opportunity for the MPO Board to provide comments. No comments were received from the public.

Participants in the review included representatives of FHWA, FTA, NCDOT, WSTA, Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), Davidson County Transportation System (DCTS), and Winston-Salem MPO staff. A full list of participants is included in the Appendix.

A desk audit of current documents and correspondence was completed prior to the site visit. In addition to the formal review, routine oversight mechanisms provide a major source of information upon which to base the certification findings.



The certification review covers the transportation planning process conducted cooperatively by the MPO, State, and public transportation operators. Background information, current status, key findings, and recommendations are summarized in the body of the report for the following subject areas selected by FHWA and FTA staff for on-site review:

- MPO Structure and Agreements
- Unified Planning Work Program/Self-Certification
- Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)
- Transit Planning
- Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Public Participation
- Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)
- Freight Planning
- Regional Coordination and Environmental Mitigation
- Transportation Safety and Security
- Nonmotorized Planning/Livability
- Travel Demand Forecasting
- Congestion Management Process / Management and Operations

3.2 Documents Reviewed

The following MPO documents were evaluated as part of this planning process review:

- UPWPs
- MPO MTP 2045 (Updated 2020)
- Self-Certification
- MPO Website and associated documents



4.0 PROGRAM REVIEW

4.1 MPO Structure and Agreements

4.1.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(d) and 23 CFR 450.314(a) state the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator shall cooperatively determine their mutual responsibilities in carrying out the metropolitan transportation planning process. These responsibilities shall be clearly identified in written agreements among the MPO, the State, and the public transportation operator serving the MPA.

4.1.2 Current Status

The MPO conducts its planning process and develops the required plans and documents as it is required to do in all its agreements. Existing agreements conform to regulatory requirements and accurately represent the 3C planning process. Roles and responsibilities are defined for the development of the MTP, TIP, UPWP, corridor studies, and other major project studies primarily through the adopted Prospectus, UPWP, and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) as agreed to by various agencies. Performance measures and targets are determined and evaluated within the scope of those required within the agreement. Both the MPO and NCDOT are partners in several agreements, which assist in the coordination of metropolitan and statewide planning.

The policy board of the MPO is the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC). The TAC includes voting members and non-voting advisory members. The TAC advisory, non-voting members represent agencies with an interest in transportation planning for the MPO area. The TAC includes a representative from the WSTA Board as a full voting member, with two weighted votes. The WSTA Director was added as a member of the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). The MOU designates a TCC to advise the TAC. The TCC is composed of key staff representatives from all local and state governmental agencies which are directly related to and concerned with the transportation planning process. Representatives of major modes of transportation (transit, aviation, bicycle and pedestrian, and highways) are invited to join the TCC. Freight operators are not represented on either the TAC or TCC.

The TCC and TAC meet every other month and occasionally more often. All jurisdictions, counties, and transit operators are represented on the TCC and TAC. The TCC and TAC operate on a one person, one vote system. However, any voting member may invoke the weighted voting system established in the MOU on any vote. A weighted voting schedule was adopted as part of the TAC by-laws. Weighted votes are apportioned based on population per the most recent decennial census with a minimum of one vote per voting member. Weighted voting is seldom used; however, this will be reassessed after the 2020 Census. The NCDOT Board of Transportation member has been assigned five votes, and the



WSTA Board member has two votes. These votes were taken from the City of Winston-Salem, the jurisdiction with the largest population.

A quorum is required for the transaction of TAC business, including conducting meetings or hearings, participation in deliberations, or voting upon or otherwise transacting the public business. A quorum consists of fifty-one percent of the voting members of the TAC, plus as many additional members as may be required to ensure that fifty-one percent of the total weighted votes are present. TCC and TAC membership has been steady over the past several years with little turnover.

The TCC and TAC formed several subcommittees including Bicycle & Greenway, Streets & Highway, and Sidewalk & Pedestrian to facilitate the 3C planning process. A succession plan for MPO staff to share responsibilities has been developed should the need arise due to vacancies or other circumstances. The MPO has developed a Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) for all federal metropolitan transportation planning requirements, and a handbook is under development.

4.1.3 Findings

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the MPO develop a standard orientation for new TAC members.
- It is recommended that the MPO fully involve the freight community in the planning process, including participation in the TCC and TAC.

Note: This recommendation was also provided at the 2016 certification review.

4.2 Unified Planning Work Program/Self-Certification

4.2.1 Regulatory Basis

23 CFR 450.308 sets the requirement that planning activities performed under Titles 23 and 49 U.S.C. be documented in a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The MPO, in cooperation with the State and public transportation operator, shall develop a UPWP that includes a discussion of the planning priorities facing the MPA and the work proposed for the next one- or two-year period by major activity and task in sufficient detail to indicate the agency that will perform the work, the schedule for completing the work, the resulting products, the proposed funding, and sources of funds.



4.2.2 Current Status

The MPO develops the UPWP annually in coordination with adjacent MPOs and NCDOT. The process begins in January with TAC review. The UPWP is adopted in May. The UPWP provides a framework by which planning is accomplished in the MPO. The UPWP provides a strategic view and strategic direction for metropolitan area planning activities. Activities are typically included in the required narrative text for each task that describes the planning priorities facing the metropolitan area. The activities in the UPWP also relate to the goals and priorities identified in the MTP via the Prospectus, which guides the MPO to have the UPWP align with the goals and priorities identified in the MTP. The UPWP provides for the development of performance measures that relate to the MTP's goals and objectives primarily through the CMP.

Required UPWP planning elements, priorities, and activities are developed, selected, and prioritized with input from MPO member jurisdictions. Planning priorities facing the metropolitan area, and all metropolitan transportation activities anticipated within the timeframe (one or two years), are typically included in the required narrative text for each work task. Any established goals, activities, and benchmarks are identified and included within the UPWP. The UPWP provides funding for the professional development and training of the MPO staff through the city budget process following the city's policies and procedures for funding the professional development of MPO staff.

Planning (PL) funds, FTA Section 5303 transit planning funds, and supplemental STP-DA planning funds are budgeted according to the work that has been planned or required during the year, projects being requested by MPO members, and as directed by the TCC and TAC. State and public transit agencies are encouraged to be involved in the development of the annual UPWP. Members of freight, non-motorized transportation, bicycle, pedestrians, and other modal interests are also informed of and encouraged to participate in UPWP development. The UPWP is not amended frequently, however, it was amended to account for CARES Act funding, which was used to fund public transit operations. A portion of the MPO lies in the adjacent High Point MPO's MAB. The MPO reimburses the High Point MPO via the UPWP.

The MPO provides direct oversight for planning projects undertaken by local governments. The MPO is very proactive in developing the UPWP and in what tasks are being undertaken for the given year. The MPO monitors work program tasks and outcomes to ensure they are adequately fulfilling Federal regulations as well as regional expectations. Specialized projects utilizing STP-DA funds are still in various stages of development and thus have not yet been completely spent. DA-funded studies are still considered after an open call.

Planning activities are tracked and their status is reported to interested parties. Major work accomplishments from previous years are included in the narrative describing the work to be accomplished in the future. MPO staff provide interested parties updates on projects,



upcoming events, and other important news regarding the MPO as it may relate to the UPWP.

The MPO annually self certifies its planning process when they are developing their UPWP. The staff provides the TCC and TAC with the necessary documentation to certify they are meeting the Federal planning requirements. NCDOT provides a checklist of topics and issues to the MPO to consider for self-certifying the planning process. The checklist of topics and issues is addressed in narrative form and provided to the MPO for review and consideration. The self-certification of the planning process is then provided to NCDOT, FHWA, and FTA. Transit operators, NCDOT, and others are provided an opportunity to review and comment on the answers provided in the checklist during the development of the draft and final UPWPs. The public is provided an opportunity at every MPO meeting to comment on the self-certification and any other transportation-related topics. The self-certification is provided to the federal agencies as part of the UPWP package of materials.

4.2.3 Findings

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the MPO update its Self-Certification checklist to account for the new planning factors.

4.3 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

4.3.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c), (h) & (i) and 23 CFR 450.324 set forth requirements for the development and content of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). Among the requirements are that the MTP address at least a 20-year planning horizon and that it includes both long and short range strategies that lead to the development of an integrated and multi-modal system to facilitate the safe and efficient movement of people and goods in addressing current and future transportation demand.

The MTP is required to provide a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive multimodal transportation planning process. The plan needs to consider all applicable issues related to the transportation systems development, land use, employment, economic development, natural environment, and housing and community development.

23 CFR 450.324(c) requires the MPO to review and update the MTP at least every four years in air quality nonattainment and maintenance areas and at least every 5 years in attainment areas to reflect current and forecasted transportation, population, land use, employment, congestion, and economic conditions and trends.



Under 23 CFR 450.324(f), the MTP is required, at a minimum, to consider the following:

- Projected transportation demand
- Existing and proposed transportation facilities
- Operational and management strategies
- Congestion management process
- Capital investment and strategies to preserve transportation infrastructure and provide for multimodal capacity
- Design concept and design scope descriptions of proposed transportation facilities
- Potential environmental mitigation activities
- Pedestrian walkway and bicycle transportation facilities
- Transportation and transit enhancements
- A financial plan

4.3.2 Current Status

The most recent MTP was adopted on November 19, 2020 with planning forecasted through 2045. The MTP was also simultaneously updated with the Congestion Management Process and the state required Comprehensive Transportation Plan. Unlike previous MTP updates, this update included assistance from a consultant, as the MPO has several new staff members. Public outreach began at the start of the coronavirus pandemic. The MPO updated their public outreach strategies while keeping public safety in mind. Outreach included virtual stakeholder interviews, three rounds of online surveys, and 14 virtually held public input meetings with web-based communication through listservs, social media, and a dedicated MTP website. In addition to the planning factors, the MTP update also includes three visions, each with two goals and several objectives within those goals. Each modal section concludes with a list of identified recommendations, including project, policy, and planning recommendations, to implement the MPO's visions for the region. For modal projects with cost estimates, staff performed an analysis utilizing the anticipated 25-year revenues. Both the project cost estimates and forecasted revenues were broken into 10-year funding bands to be consistent with the horizon years of 2025, 2035, and 2045. Traditional funding sources were assumed as part of the 2045 MTP update. For roadway projects, prioritization in the first 10 years is based on NCDOT's Strategic Prioritization of Transportation (SPOT) prioritization process and incorporation into the STIP. The selection process for the latter two horizon years is not identified. MPO has documented existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities, and developed short and long-range implementation plans for creating a strong and well-linked bicycle and pedestrian network. Bicycle and Pedestrian recommended projects are prioritized based on the forecasted budget for each horizon year, feedback from the public and stakeholders, and a project score based on a selection of criteria. Transit project recommendations and planning strategies for the MTP are prioritized based on local agency coordination, analysis of existing service characteristics, and public input. Project recommendations for other non-highway modes are derived from state plans.



The MTP is linked to land use plans within the region to support its goals. Each area plan contains a transportation section, which draws its data from the MTP, CTP, and other transportation planning documents. The MPO works very closely with Forsyth County and other municipal agencies to coordinate the goals and objectives of the MTP into the road, transit, bicycle, and pedestrian projects associated with both public and private projects. Asset management principles and techniques are incorporated into the planning process. Roadway and bridge assets are evaluated by NCDOT and the City of Winston-Salem regularly. Ratings such as pavement condition and bridge sufficiency are used in identifying needs for revitalization projects. The MTP identifies long and short-term strategies and actions that lead to the development of the region's multimodal transportation system. Area and municipal plans have been evaluated and prioritized to implement the projects listed in the MTP and state mandated Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). All projects are a jointly considered effort, including working with adjacent MPO partners and regional transportation providers.

Financial Planning

The financial plan is a comparison of existing funding streams with projected needs. Statutory language requires that the financial plan indicate the resources from public and private sources that are reasonably expected to be made available to implement the MTP. The MPO's financial plan complies with federal law by 1) demonstrating how the STIP can be implemented; 2) identifying any innovative financing techniques to provide funds for the projects, programs, and strategies in the MTP; and 3) identifying other transportation projects that would be implemented if additional funds were available. Assumptions as to the availability of non-federal funds are made without forecasting. There is no innovative financing contained in the financial planning.

The revenue forecasting approach is cooperative between the MPO, NCDOT, transit operators, and local jurisdictions. The STIP and TIP contain financial assumptions and recommendations that are included in the MTP. Other financial assumptions and recommendations from the municipalities are incorporated and blended in with the overall financial plan to generate revenues and expenditures. Assumptions and data sources for each revenue source (federal, state, local, and other) are documented in the financial plan. The financial plan contains several important sections including 1) the various funding sources for transportation, 2) a review of the historical trends for funding in the urban area, 3) a summary of the federal and state funds in the draft STIP, and 4) the urban area's projected transportation revenues. The financial plan is made available to the public through its inclusion as an element in the overall MTP, and thus is included in the regular public participation process.

Project cost estimates are derived by engineers and are consistent among the implementing agencies. There are documented cooperative procedures using charts, tables, and narrative that describe the current fiscal constraint demonstration. A set of financial assumptions and calculations are established that guide the general approach to forecasting future revenues. These assumptions and calculations are open, transparent, and available to the public.



Generally, an amount of 10-20% is used for contingencies when estimating a project's total estimated cost. Updates to project estimates may occur during the long-range planning and programming process when the scope of the project changes significantly or a significant change in the project delivery date is anticipated. Adequate levels of operation and maintenance are typically determined by the implementing agency, which is usually NCDOT or the municipality.

The TIP provides specific information on revenue source by program year for all available federal and state funds. The description of the project(s), the total cost of the project, previous expenditures, fiscal years those funds are programmed to be used, and the source(s) of funds are included. The financial plans of the TIP are consistent with those of the MTP. The MTP utilizes the TIP as a basis for developing the financial plan assumptions and calculations. The MPO consults with various NCDOT departments and divisions and the City of Winston-Salem's Engineering and Public Works staff to ensure the TIP financial plan is consistent with the STIP.

4.3.3 Findings

Commendation:

- The MPO is commended for its extensive use of public involvement techniques during the development of the MTP.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the MPO coordinate with relevant stakeholder agencies and discuss the potential types of environmental mitigation activities and areas that may have the greatest potential to restore, maintain, and/or enhance environmental amenities. The discussion should consider policies, programs, or strategies; involve the Federal and State environmental regulatory agencies; and document the results of such discussions as part of the MTP

4.4 Transit Planning

4.4.1 Regulatory Basis

49 U.S.C. 5303 and 23 U.S.C. 134 require the transportation planning process in metropolitan areas to consider all modes of travel in the development of their plans and programs. Federal regulations cited in 23 CFR 450.314 state that the MPO in cooperation with the State and operators of publicly owned transit services shall be responsible for carrying out the transportation planning process.

4.4.2 Current Status



The City of Winston-Salem and the Winston-Salem Urbanized Area MPO is the FTA Designated Recipient of 5307 urbanized area funding for the Winston-Salem Urbanized Area (UZA). The Winston-Salem Urbanized Area MPO is currently served by three public transportation providers, which provide a variety of fixed route, vanpool commuter express bus, and demand-response transit services.

Three public transit providers operate in the Winston-Salem UZA: 1) Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART), 2) Winston-Salem Transit Authority (WSTA), and 3) Davidson County Transportation. As the Designated Recipient, the City of Winston-Salem, in coordination with the Winston-Salem Urbanized Area MPO, apportions 5307 urbanized area funding to the three urban systems in the UZA based on a mutually agreed upon formula/agreement. WSTA applies for the Davidson County apportionment of the Winston-Salem Urbanized Area. PART is not a designated recipient of the FTA Section 5307 funding; however, it is a direct recipient of FTA funding for the Winston-Salem Urbanized Area.

The transit systems are involved in the metropolitan planning process through Transit Representation on the MPO Policy board and being involved in the MTP, UPWP, and TIP processes.

NCDOT is the Designated Recipient of FTA 5303/5304 Statewide and Metropolitan Planning funds. The MPO is the sub-recipient of FTA Section 5303 Statewide and Metropolitan Planning program funding awarded and passed through from NCDOT. The FTA Apportionment for Section 5307 Urbanized Area formula funds is to the Winston-Salem Urbanized Area. There is a split agreement in place that is applied to the UZA FTA 5307 Apportionment to divide the funding between each transit agency. The split agreement is provided to FTA annually.

4.4.3 Findings

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the MPO include FTA obligated funding for all public transit agencies in the annual listing of projects.

4.5 Transportation Improvement Program

4.5.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(c),(h) & (j) set forth requirements for the MPO to cooperatively develop a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Under 23 CFR 450.326, the TIP must meet the following requirements:

- Must cover at least a four-year horizon and be updated at least every four years.



- Surface transportation projects funded under Title 23 U.S.C. or Title 49 U.S.C., except as noted in the regulations, are required to be included in the TIP.
- List project description, cost, funding source, and identification of the agency responsible for carrying out each project.
- Projects need to be consistent with the adopted MTP.
- Must be fiscally constrained.
- The MPO must provide all interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed TIP.

4.5.2 Current Status

The TIP project selection process is coordinated with the State and transit operators. The MPO provides a prioritized list of projects to the NCDOT with relevant local data for inclusion in the SPOT process. The MPO follows the guidelines of the SPOT process, including collaboration between the MPO, adjacent MPOs and NCDOT Division 9 to maximize projects funded in the TIP. The draft STIP is released and the MPO provides a local version of the document for public review. Both the NCDOT and the MPO provide opportunities for the public to make comments on the draft STIP and TIP, and public hearings are held. The final STIP is released and other than minor adjustments to funding and time changes, the TIP matches the STIP. These administrative modifications are incorporated into the final TIP to ensure TIP / STIP consistency.

The allocation of STBG-DA funds is completed exclusively through the MPO with placeholder TIP assignments and amendments to the TIP as needed for the project types such as greenways, bicycle and pedestrian facilities, intersections or small roadway projects, and transit and enhancement projects. For projects that are incorporated in the STP-DA project list, a public call for projects and work with the individual municipalities is ongoing and extensive prior to project evaluation and prioritization.

The NCDOT provides financial estimates to the MPO in a timely manner. The MPO avails itself of the opportunity to group projects in the TIP based upon funding source. For example, CMAQ funded projects are typically listed in the TIP as a lump-sum, while STBG-DA products are listed individually.

The MPO receives the list of annual obligations for projects from the NCDOT Division of Planning and Programming including annual obligations of both federal and state dollars by project, project stage, date of action, and funding source. The information is presented in a spreadsheet after the end of the fiscal year. The obligated funds list is included in the Draft TIP and released for public review. The final TIP is then produced and published. The MPO modifies the list to make it more readable for the public by identifying projects by common street names rather than State route numbers. In years in which the obligated funds listing is produced without the TIP, the list is provided for public review and posted on the MPO website. The annual listing is made available to the public in a notebook, which is placed in public



libraries, municipal buildings, NCDOT Division 9, and on the MPO website. The method for comparing the projects in the annual listing to the TIP involves including the obligated funds document with the TIP, including the applicable years since the previous TIP.

4.5.3 Findings

The Winston-Salem MPO TIP is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations and practices.

4.6 Public Participation

4.6.1 Regulatory Basis

Sections 134(i)(5), 134(j)(1)(B) of Title 23 and Section 5303(i)(5) and 5303(j)(1)(B) of Title 49, require a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to provide adequate opportunity for the public to participate in and comment on the products and planning processes of the MPO. The requirements for public involvement are detailed in 23 CFR 450.316(a) and (b), which require the MPO to develop and use a documented participation plan that includes explicit procedures and strategies to include the public and other interested parties in the transportation planning process.

Specific requirements include giving adequate and timely notice of opportunities to participate in or comment on transportation issues and processes, employing visualization techniques to describe metropolitan transportation plans and TIPs, making public information readily available in electronically accessible formats and means such as the world wide web, holding public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times, demonstrating explicit consideration and response to public input, and a periodically reviewing of the effectiveness of the participation plan.

4.6.2 Current Status

The Public Participation Plan (PPP), most recently updated in January 2020, was developed and reviewed by municipal, State, and Federal partners as well as stakeholder groups identified through years of public involvement on plans and projects. The MPO has found that going where the community is at public functions or events, rather than holding meetings in libraries or town halls, is a more successful way to gather public input. However, due to the covid-19 pandemic, the MPO has made updates to the plan to include accommodations for virtual public participation. The MPO also “piggybacks” on other public meetings such as small area plan meetings coordinated by the City of Winston-Salem Planning Department. Additionally, new methods of reaching the public and underserved populations are brainstormed during each major plan update and involvement period. Information is provided to Latinos and other groups new to the area. Postcards are sent to citizens living in “gap” areas. Demographic



information is captured at public hearings. Examples of successful public outreach include the Creative Corridors Coalition identifying individual corridors needing improvement for visual appeal such as the bridges on the U.S. 421 (formerly I-40 Business) reconstruction project, and identifying corridors whose historic aspects needed to be preserved.

Opportunities are provided for public involvement at key decision points in the planning, programming, and project development phases of transportation decision-making. Public comments are taken on the existing plan prior to beginning the update, and during the public comment period once the draft is available for review. There is a public comment period at the beginning of each TCC and TAC meeting. The public and interested parties receive feedback on the proposals and questions they put forward in numerous ways, including: 1) acknowledged with a written or emailed receipt message for comments submitted in writing, via email, U.S. mail, or through Internet forms; 2) responded to as appropriate, which could include a direct communication to the commenter or a response in the revised document; 3) documented and presented to the MPO's TCC and TAC, in summary form or verbatim, before a vote is taken to adopt the plan or document in question; and 4) included in summary form or verbatim with final documents, if sufficiently significant.

The PPP contributes to the identification of the needs of those traditionally underserved by existing transportation systems, including low-income and minority households. Public involvement events are specifically scheduled for a full day at the WSTA transit center and the Public Health Department. Organizations representing low-income and minority populations are consulted when developing the PPP and provide continuing public involvement on projects located in minority, Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and low-income areas.

Public involvement in the metropolitan transportation planning process is coordinated with the statewide public involvement process to enhance public consideration of issues, plans, and programs. The MPO highlights any statewide plans, programs, and workshops that are available to the public. MPO staff attend statewide events. Information about the statewide programs of importance to the public, such as the State Transportation Plan and the Governor's Highway Safety program, are included in the Appendixes of the MTP document and noted in the text.

Opportunities for participation in the public involvement process are also provided to traffic, ridesharing, parking, transportation safety and enforcement agencies, airport authorities, private transportation providers, and city officials. WSTA and PART are partners in developing the MTP and TIP. Public involvement is specifically held at the WSTA transit center during operating hours to engage the WSTA and PART riders as well as clients using intercity bus services. Valuable feedback on transit service and other issues related to the network are obtained during these events. The TCC members of the airport commission are provided an opportunity to review and assist in the development of the MTP and TIP. Private transportation providers are accounted for in the MTP, and the municipal staff that monitors for-hire transportation services participates in plan development. City and municipal officials are consulted at all phases of MTP and TIP development.



The MPO presents information on planning procedures and products, including the MTP and TIP, by using a variety of methods, depending on the audience, venue, and available resources. For general information, the MPO uses its website to disseminate information, creating specific pages for planning purposes, such as the MTP and the NCDOT Prioritization process. The MPO's website is extensive and includes administrative information such as rosters, agendas, minutes, by-laws, maps, plans (viewing and downloads), transportation study and project information, and links to websites, videos, and events. The website is updated as needed. The MPO maintains email lists developed over time that include: 1) elected officials from member jurisdictions, 2) community members that asked to receive information, 3) the media, and 4) past meeting attendees and commenters.

For policy board meetings, the MPO sends hard copy agenda packets and plans to the TCC and TAC members and to staff and citizens upon request. At the meetings, the MPO staff present information verbally, supported by graphics, generally in power point presentations, but occasionally in display maps or video presentations. Numerous citizens and staff members take advantage of this link to review the agenda and materials.

Visualization

The MPO uses numerous techniques to visually share its work with the public. Examples include: 1) updates of the MTP on Facebook, 2) drone footage on the Northern Beltway project, 3) mobile advertising for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, 4) interactive mapping for the MTP and CTP, and 5) videos and graphics on the website to highlight information. The MPO uses printed maps, power point presentations, and videos at public input meetings. The MPO also uses computer or mobile SMART Board to link to on-line resources, including the tax database to show properties in relation to beltway and other project alignments. In addition to providing information in tables and lists, the MPO provides maps, photos, cross sections, flowcharts, and other graphics to communicate and display information. Examples of extensive use of graphics can be found in MPO-funded studies. The MPO has used a variety of creative and innovative methods in the past to present and disseminate information. The MPO's virtual public meetings for the MTP included a town hall style setting with a virtual lobby and rooms to visit for the various transportation modes.

4.6.3 Findings

The Winston-Salem MPO's provisions for public participation is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations and practices.



4.7 Civil Rights (Title VI, EJ, LEP, ADA)

4.7.1 Regulatory Basis

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, prohibits discrimination based upon race, color, and national origin. Specifically, 42 U.S.C. 2000d states that “No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” In addition to Title VI, there are other Nondiscrimination statutes that afford legal protection. These statutes include the following: Section 162 (a) of the Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973 (23 U.S.C. 324), Age Discrimination Act of 1975, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973/Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990. ADA specifies that programs and activities funded with Federal dollars are prohibited from discrimination based on disability.

Executive Order #12898 (Environmental Justice) directs federal agencies to develop strategies to address disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects of their programs on minority and low-income populations. In compliance with this Executive Order, USDOT and FHWA issued orders to establish policies and procedures for addressing environmental justice in minority and low-income populations. The planning regulations, at 23 CFR 450.316(a)(1)(vii), require that the needs of those “traditionally underserved” by existing transportation systems, such as low-income and/or minority households, be sought out and considered.

Executive Order # 13166 (Limited-English-Proficiency) requires agencies to ensure that limited English proficiency persons are able to meaningfully access the services provided consistent with and without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of each federal agency.

4.7.2 Current Status

Demographic Profile

The WSMPO addresses Environmental Justice (EJ) in Chapter 7 of its MTP. The introductory section of Chapter 7 is well written and easy to understand. The MPO maintains a demographic profile based on census block group data and includes mapping of the following demographics:

- Minority populations
- Households in poverty
- Limited English Proficiency (LEP)
- Households with no vehicle
- Black population
- Minority population other than Black



- Hispanic ethnicity population

MPO staff reported that the demographic data is based on 2016 American Community Survey five-year estimates. The MPO has overlaid projects in the MTP on its mapping to provide a visual of which populations will be impacted by planned projects. To account for cumulative impacts, we suggest that the MPO also overlay current and past projects in addition to planned projects. We also encourage the MPO to identify any minority business communities that may exist within the MPO boundaries.

Regarding analysis of system-wide project impacts to EJ or minority and low-income populations (MLI), the MPO conducted a “Degree of Impact” analysis, which assigns each of the MPO’s 293 block groups a score of 0 to 6 based on the number of EJ populations exceeding the area average. This method provides a good visual of the degree of EJ populations affected by planned projects. Table 27 provides the results of the analysis and asserts that project impacts are evenly distributed. This method, however, does not allow for a direct comparison between MLI and non-MLI populations, which is key when conducting EJ analyses due to non-MLI block groups being aggregated with “Low Score (0-2)” block groups. We therefore caution the MPO in making the statement that project impacts are evenly distributed and recommend conducting an analysis that encompasses a direct comparison between MLI vs non-MLI populations.

Additionally, for a more complete picture of the distribution of benefits and burdens, we encourage the MPO to conduct other types of quantitative analyses using data sets already captured by the MPO. One example is overlaying demographic information on mapping of the MPO’s crash data to determine if crashes occur disproportionately in MLI areas compared to non-MLI areas. Other types of analyses should address questions such as:

- Where does congestion exist with respect to EJ versus non-EJ populations? Based on the MTP, who will benefit from improvements in congestion when comparing EJ populations to non-EJ populations?
- How do EJ areas and non-EJ areas compare regarding the best/worst levels of service?
- Where are the safety issues (vehicle crashes, pedestrian injuries/fatalities, bicycle crashes, etc.) regarding EJ populations versus non-EJ populations? Does the plan provide for equitably distributed improvements?
- Regarding improved accessibility to jobs, shopping, etc., how do EJ populations compare to non-EJ populations?
- How do commute times compare regarding EJ populations versus non-EJ populations?

The above questions are just a few examples. The MPO will need to decide the types of analyses to conduct based on factors such as the availability of data and the measures it feels are most suitable for comparison purposes.



Planning Considerations

Regarding the overall planning process, we commend the MPO for addressing EJ as its first goal and objective, which is different from the previous MTP:

Goal#1: Improve Mobility and Accessibility for people and goods across the region.

Objective #1: Promote equitable transportation options for low income and minority communities and the aging population.

When evaluating projects, the MPO includes an EJ criterion in its scoring system. Staff provided a specific example of this regarding the selection of bike/pedestrian projects, which had not been done previously.

Public Involvement

Regarding the MPO's public involvement efforts to engage MLI populations, staff provided several examples. One example is their work with "Building Integrated Communities," which targets immigrants, the Hispanic population, and anyone new to the community. Other examples surround their efforts with developing their Pedestrian Master Plan, starting with ensuring that the steering committee for this effort was diverse. Additionally, the MPO found that using interactive mapping to capture comments allowed them to pinpoint the geographic origins of all comments. They therefore determined if they were receiving comments from MLI areas. If not, they conducted outreach specific to those areas, which included efforts such as one-on-one interviews and specifically targeting those areas with post cards. We commend the MPO for this innovative approach.

Based on the above, COVID presented opportunities to be innovative, however, it also presented challenges, one of which was the collection of demographic information for those attending virtual public outreach events. Prior to COVID, the MPO captured demographic information by asking attendees to voluntarily fill out a form. During COVID, the only method the MPO used was to provide a screen shot of the virtual meeting. Since this method leaves room for significant error, we suggest that the MPO send a follow-up email to all attendees soliciting their demographic information.

In summary, the MPO overall is doing a good job collecting and maintaining its demographic profile. It also appears to be doing a good job with addressing EJ throughout its planning processes. Additionally, the MPO has devised ways to be innovative regarding its public involvement practices to engage EJ populations.

4.7.3 Findings

Commendation:

- The MPO is commended for addressing EJ as it #1 Goal/Objective.



- The MPO is commended for being innovative in its efforts to engage EJ populations in the development of its Pedestrian Master plan through interactive mapping to capture public comments and target EJ populations where their participation is found to be underrepresented.

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the MPO conduct an EJ analysis that provides for a comparison between MLI and non-MLI populations by disaggregating non-MLI census block groups from MLI block groups. We also encourage the MPO to consider additional analyses based on data that the MPO already captures (safety, congestion, etc.).

4.8 Freight Planning

4.8.1 Regulatory Basis

The MAP-21 established in 23 U.S.C. 167 a policy to improve the condition and performance of the national freight network and achieve goals related to economic competitiveness and efficiency; congestion; productivity; safety, security, and resilience of freight movement; infrastructure condition; use of advanced technology; performance, innovation, competition, and accountability, while reducing environmental impacts.

In addition, 23 U.S.C. 134 and 23 CFR 450.306 specifically identify the need to address freight movement as part of the metropolitan transportation planning process.

4.8.2 Current Status

The MPO's Public Participation Policy (PPP) provides opportunities for freight entities and shippers to provide input into the development of the MTP and TIP. Outreach and feedback from participants in the freight community is gathered through: 1) area plan development, 2) involvement with groups and local institutions of higher learning, and 3) public meetings. The involvement of the freight community is an ongoing process; however, freight outreach efforts have not resulted in significant participation. The MPO participates in NCDOT's freight council.

The MPO considers and evaluates land use and freight-oriented developments within the MPA through site plan evaluation and area plan processes. The highway network in the Piedmont Triad area, which encompasses the Winston-Salem, High Point, Greensboro, and Burlington MPOs, has a robust highway network, making it attractive for freight distribution hubs. Federal Express operates a hub facility at Piedmont Triad International Airport, and many warehouse projects have been constructed in the region.



At the state level, NCDOT's SPOT process for ranking projects assigns more weight to freight projects now than in the past. For the MPO, freight-related corridors are not given extra weight as part of the TIP and MTP projects selection process. The term "freight corridor" has not been defined for transportation planning purposes. The MPO does not have a process in place to collect traffic data and monitor the system performance and reliability of the regional transportation system regarding major freight movements.

4.8.3 Findings

Recommendations:

- It is recommended that the MPO fully involve the freight community in the planning process, including participation in the TCC and TAC invite members of the freight community to participate in the TCC and TAC.

Note: This recommendation was also provided at the 2016 certification review.

4.9 Regional Coordination and Environmental Mitigation

4.9.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(g) & (i)(5)-(6) and 23 CFR 450.316(b-e) set forth requirements for consultation in developing the MTP and TIP. Consultation is also addressed specifically in connection with the MTP in 23 CFR 450.324(g)(1-2) and in 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) related to environmental mitigation.

In developing the MTP and TIP, the MPO shall, to the extent practicable, develop a documented process that outlines roles, responsibilities, and key decision points for consulting with other governments and agencies as described below:

- Agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities (State, local, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, or freight)
- Other providers of transportation services
- Indian Tribal Government(s)
- Federal land management agencies

23 U.S.C. 134(i)(2)(D) 23 CFR 450.324(f)(10) requires environmental mitigation be set forth in connection with the MTP. The MTP is required to include a discussion of types of potential environmental mitigation activities for the transportation improvements and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the plan.



23 U.S.C. 168 and Appendix A to 23 CFR Part 450 provide for linking the transportation planning and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) processes. A Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) study can incorporate the initial phases of NEPA through the consideration of natural, physical, and social effects, coordination with environmental resource agencies, and public involvement. This will allow the analysis in the PEL study to be referenced in the subsequent NEPA document once the project is initiated, saving time and money with project implementation.

4.9.2 Current Status

The MPO participates in merger meetings with NCDOT and coordinates with North Carolina environmental regulatory agencies, the Catawba Tribe, Forsyth County Environmental Assistance and Protection, and the Forsyth County Historic Resource Commission in the transportation planning process. The MPO collects GIS data from these entities as well as internally. As part of the consultation process, resource agencies are asked to provide input. The MTP includes a map depicting environmental features. One form of mitigation that was emphasized for this MTP update is the increased focus on roadway modernization projects versus widening or new location projects.

The MPO's consultation process provides for the consideration and responsiveness to input received. Comments on the MTP received from resource agencies during the consultation process are considered. Evidence of plans, maps, and data obtained from agencies contacted and records of comparisons to the MTP and TIP are provided. All consultations and comments received during the resource agency consultation process for the MTP are summarized in the Plan and included in their entirety in the Appendix.

Opportunities are provided for agency consultation at key decision points in the planning and programming (TIP) phases of transportation planning decision-making. The Forsyth County Environmental Assistance and Protection agency, Forsyth County Historic Resource Commissions, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality, EPA, and other agencies that are consulted during Environmental Assessments (EAs) and NEPA projects are involved during the planning and development of MPO projects.

The consultation in the metropolitan transportation planning process is coordinated with the statewide consultation process to enhance public consideration of issues, plans, and programs. The MPO maintains a list of agencies with names and addresses, including agencies responsible for natural resources, land use, economic development, and environmental protection. Agencies are informed by email and personal phone calls when documents are in the draft or review stage. The agencies are part of the MPO's consultation and notification process via bimonthly TCC and TAC packets.

4.9.3 Findings

Recommendations:



- It is recommended that the MPO coordinate with relevant stakeholder agencies and discuss the potential types of environmental mitigation activities and areas that may have the greatest potential to restore, maintain, and/or enhance environmental amenities. The discussion should consider policies, programs, or strategies; involve the Federal and State environmental regulatory agencies; and document the results of such discussions as part of the MTP.

4.10 Transportation Safety and Security

4.10.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(h)(1)(B) requires MPOs to consider safety as one of ten planning factors. As stated in 23 CFR 450.306(a)(2), the planning process needs to consider and implement projects, strategies, and services that will increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users.

In addition, SAFETEA-LU established a core safety program called the Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) (23 U.S.C. 148), which introduced a mandate for states to have Strategic Highway Safety Plans (SHSPs). 23 CFR 450.306 (d) requires the metropolitan transportation planning process should be consistent with the SHSP, and other transit safety and security planning.

23 U.S.C. 134(h)(1)(C) requires MPOs to consider security as one of ten planning factors. As stated in 23 CFR 450.306(a)(3), the Metropolitan Transportation Planning process provides for consideration of security of the transportation system.

The regulations state that the degree and consideration of security should be based on the scale and complexity of many different local issues. Under 23 CFR 450.324(h), the MTP should include emergency relief and disaster preparedness plans and strategies and policies that support homeland security, as appropriate.

4.10.2 Current Status

The City of Winston-Salem and NCDOT work collaboratively to develop safety goals, objectives, performance measures, and strategies for the urbanized area. The City's Police Department, Forsyth County Sheriff's Office, Emergency Management Department, town managers, and local agencies are also involved. These agencies meet regularly and as needed to discuss a variety of issues and concerns regarding safety, security, and transportation. The MPO adopted NCDOT's safety measures. The MPO follows the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP), as funding can be provided through the TIP. Safety is also considered in determining which projects will be included in the MTP and TIP. Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP)



projects located within the MPO are included in the TIP. Most of these projects originate with NCDOT and are routinely included in the TIP when project requests are taken.

The process for developing safety goals, objectives, performance measures, and strategies for the MPA is a collaborative process between the Winston-Salem MPO staff and NCDOT. The safety goals and objectives for the MPA are consistent with the State Highway Safety Plan (SHSP). Safety is a component in examining projects for inclusion in the MTP and TIP as part of their project selection process. NCDOT also has funds specifically set aside for making safety improvements along roadways, including guardrails, rumble strips, enhanced lighting, turn lanes, pavement markings, and signs.

The MPO area Davidson County is also part of the Northern Piedmont Hazard Mitigation Plan (2015) which encompasses seven counties; Caswell, Davie County, Forsyth County, Rockingham County, Stokes County, Surry County, Yadkin County. The regional Hazard Mitigation Plan builds on the individual County-specific hazard mitigation plans. Plans have been developed for evacuation of transportation-disadvantaged populations such as the elderly, low-income, and disabled. The MPO and local and state emergency management agencies, including emergency departments and the Sheriff's Office, coordinate evacuation efforts based upon the emergency.

4.10.3 Findings

The Winston-Salem MPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations and practices.

4.11 Nonmotorized Planning/Livability

4.11.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 217(g) states that bicyclists and pedestrians shall be given due consideration in the comprehensive transportation plans developed by each MPO under 23 U.S.C. 134. Bicycle transportation facilities and pedestrian walkways shall be considered, where appropriate, in conjunction with all new construction and reconstruction of transportation facilities.

23 CFR 450.306 sets forth the requirement that the scope of the metropolitan planning process "will increase the safety for motorized and non-motorized users; increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users; and protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life.

4.11.2 Current Status

The MPO is very supportive of bicycle and pedestrian planning efforts in the region. Public input abounds on this subject. The MPO has a Sidewalk and Pedestrian subcommittee and a



Bicycle and Greenway subcommittee, which assist with planning, prioritization, and project selection. The MPO coordinates with NCDOT to include bicycle and pedestrian modes in projects, where possible. One such example is the bicycle and pedestrian accommodations on the new bridges crossing the U.S. 421 (formerly I-40 Business) reconstruction project.

In North Carolina, local governments are required to pay a 20% match for stand-alone bicycle/pedestrian projects; therefore, local government buy-in is a required prerequisite in the planning process. This has proven to be a challenge occasionally. Nearly all funding for stand-alone bicycle and pedestrian projects programmed in the MTP are assumed to be funded with MPO direct allocation of Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds, along with local match. The MPO is considering strategies to close bicycle and pedestrian gaps in county areas impacting regional connections.

4.11.3 Findings

The Winston-Salem MPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations and practices.

4.12 Travel Demand Forecasting

4.12.1 Regulatory Basis

23 CFR 450.324(f)(1) requires that the Metropolitan Transportation Plan include the projected transportation demand of persons and goods in the Metropolitan Planning Area over the period of the transportation plan. Travel demand forecasting models are used in the planning process to identify deficiencies in future year transportation systems and evaluate the impacts of alternative transportation investments. In air quality non-attainment and maintenance areas, they are also used to estimate regional vehicle activity for use in mobile source emission models that support air quality conformity determinations.

4.12.2 Current Status

During the MTP update, socioeconomic (SE) data was reviewed by MPO staff. The MPO met with the City-County Planning Board and member jurisdictions and reached out to local employers and schools as part of the SE update for the travel demand model (TDM). The Piedmont Authority for Regional Transportation (PART) is the custodian of the model and serves four MPOs. The model working group meets monthly. Its goals include incorporating Community Viz, and transitioning to real-time socioeconomic data. Although project selection is primarily data-driven, public input is also a key component to project selection and inclusion into the MTP. One example is the exclusion of the London Lane Widening due to numerous public comments against the project.



4.12.3 Findings

The Winston-Salem MPO is found to be fully compliant with applicable laws, regulations and practices.

4.13 Congestion Management Process / Management and Operations

4.13.1 Regulatory Basis

23 U.S.C. 134(k)(3) and 23 CFR 450.322 set forth requirements for the congestion management process (CMP) in TMAs. The CMP is a systematic approach for managing congestion through a process that provides for a safe and effective integrated management and operation of the multimodal transportation system. TMAs designated as non-attainment for ozone must also provide an analysis of the need for additional capacity for a proposed improvement over travel demand reduction, and operational management strategies.

23 CFR 450.324(f)(5) requires the MTP include Management and Operations (M&O) of the transportation network as an integrated, multimodal approach to optimize the performance of the existing transportation infrastructure. Effective M&O strategies include measurable regional operations goals and objectives and specific performance measures to optimize system performance.

4.13.2 Current Status

The MPO's Congestion Management Process was reviewed prior to the quadrennial certification review. At this time, the MPO is already working with the FHWA-NC Division to make recommended improvements to the process. As such, the reviewers felt it would be redundant and unnecessary to provide CMP comments in the certification review, particularly since action has already taken place to make recommended improvements to the CMP.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The FHWA and FTA review found that the metropolitan transportation planning process conducted in the Winston-Salem urbanized area MEETS Federal planning requirements as follows.

As a result of this review, FHWA and FTA are certifying the transportation planning process which is conducted by NCDOT, Winston-Salem MPO, and WSTA. There are recommendations in this Report that warrant close attention and follow-up, as well as areas where the TMA is performing very well that are to be commended.



APPENDIX A – PARTICIPANTS & AGENDA

The following individuals were involved in the Winston-Salem urbanized area on-site review:

Team Members

- Bill Marley, Community Planner, FHWA NC
- Suzette Morales, Community Planner, FHWA NC
- Joe Geigle, Congestion Management Engineer, FHWA NC
- Lynise DeVance, Civil Rights Program Manager, FHWA NC
- Parris Orr, Community Planner, FTA Region 4
- John Crocker, Community Planner, FTA Region 4

Participants

- Toneq' McCullough, Director of Transportation, Winston-Salem MPO
- Kelly Garvin, Planning Development Coordinator Winston-Salem MPO
- Byron Brown, Principal Planner, Winston-Salem MPO
- Matthew Burczyk, Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator, Winston-Salem MPO
- Laura Nixon, Engineering Tech, Winston-Salem MPO
- Kirk Erickson, TAC/TCC Secretary, City of Winston-Salem
- Victoria Bailiff, Transportation Planner, Winston-Salem MPO
- Donna Woodson, General Manager, WSTA
- Richard Jones, Transportation/Fleet Maintenance Director, DCTS
- Scott Rhine, Executive Director, PART
- Fred Haith, Division 9 Planning Engineer, NCDOT
- Daryl Vreeland, Transportation Engineer, NCDOT Transportation Planning Division



Winston-Salem Planning Certification Review Agenda

Wednesday, December 2, 2020

8:50 – 9:00	Introduction and Purpose of Certification Review
9:00 – 10:00	Public Transit
10:00 – 11:15	Public Involvement
	Title VI and Environmental Justice
	Visualization
11:15 – 11:30	Break
11:30 – 12:00	Organizational Structure
	Agreements and Contracts
	Metropolitan Area Boundary
12:00 – 12:30	Congestion Management Program
12:30 – 12:45	General 3-C Comments from MPO/TPD/NCDOT Division

Thursday, December 3

9:00 – 9:15	MPO Best Practices
9:15 – 10:00	Metropolitan Transportation Plan
	Environmental Mitigation
	Financial Planning
	Bicycle and Pedestrian
	Freight
	Safety



Security

10:00 – 10:30

Unified Planning Work Program

10:30 – 10:45

Break

10:45 – 11:15

Transportation Improvement Program

List of Obligated Projects

11:15 – 11:45

Management & Operations

11:45 – 12:00

Self-Certification

12:00 – 1:00

Lunch

1:00 – 2:00

TAC/TCC Feedback/Input Meeting

5:00 – 6:30

Virtual Public Meeting



APPENDIX B – PUBLIC COMMENTS

The Review Team held an Open Public Meeting, advertised by the Winston-Salem MPO, to discuss the transportation planning process for the Winston-Salem urbanized area. The meeting was held virtually via WebEx on Thursday, December 3, 2020, from 5pm to 6:30pm. The meeting was held in conjunction with the MPO's Public Participation Plan public meeting. There was no participation nor comments from the public at this meeting. There was a 30-day public comment review period which ended on December 21, 2020. There were no comments received from the public.

The TAC/MPO Board also had an opportunity to provide input, to the Review Team, on the transportation planning process at the end of the December 3rd certification review. The TAC Chairman, Mayor Mike Horn, of the Town of Lewisville was in attendance. The Mayor has been a member for the TAC for the past 20 years. Mayor Mike Horn commented that each of the jurisdictions work well together to support the 3-C process but wanted an opportunity for new TAC members to have an orientation on the MPO and the transportation process.



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The original item was published from 12/6/2020 9:16:00 PM to 1/24/2021 12:00:00 AM.

Transportation

Posted on: November 19, 2020

[ARCHIVED] 2020 Federal Certification Review

The Federal Highway Administration, the Federal Transit Administration and the Environmental Protection Agency want your opinion on whether transportation planning here is continuous, cooperative and comprehensive.



This periodic certification of transportation planning and procedures looks at Winston-Salem, Forsyth County, and the surrounding area, including King, Bermuda Run, and portions of Davie, Davidson and Stokes counties.

If you live in these areas, we encourage you to attend a virtual public meeting from 5:00 pm to 6:30 pm, Thursday Dec. 3, 2020.

<https://cityofws.webex.com/cityofws/j.php?MTID=m04ac50e53458ef3205044a533a772cec>

Meeting Number: 173 399 0002 Password: FED2020

Join by Phone: 1-408-418-9388; Access Code: 173 399 0002

You may also submit written comments or emails by 5 PM, Dec 21, 2020. Comments in writing should be sent to:

Byron Brown
 City of Winston-Salem DOT
 P.O. Box 2511, Winston-Salem NC 27102

By email: byronb@cityofws.org

Public notice of public transportation activities and time established for public review of and comments on the TIP will satisfy the program of projects (POP) requirements. Persons needing special provisions, including language assistance to attend this meeting should contact Byron Brown (byronb@cityofws.org, 336-747-6871) at least 48 hours in advance.

The recording of this meeting is available for view at:
<https://cityofws.webex.com/cityofws/ldr.php?RCID=4336646470034b3db1e05743d834a75a>
 Password: mGQ3SNmN

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La Administración Federal de Carreteras, la Administración Federal de Tránsito y la Agencia de Protección Ambiental quieren su opinión sobre si la planificación del transporte aquí es continua, cooperativa e integral.

Esta certificación periódica de planificación y procedimientos de transporte analiza Winston-Salem, el condado de Forsyth y el área circundante, incluidos King, Bermuda Run y partes de los condados de Davie, Davidson y Stokes.

Si vive en estas áreas, le pedimos que asista a una reunión pública virtual de 5:00 p.m. a 6:30 p.m., el jueves 3 de diciembre de 2020.

[https://cityofws.webex.com/cityofws/j.php?
MTID=m04ac50e53458ef3205044a533a772cec](https://cityofws.webex.com/cityofws/j.php?MTID=m04ac50e53458ef3205044a533a772cec)

Número de reunión: 173 399 0002 contraseña: FED2020

Unirse por teléfono: 1-408-418-9388; Código de acceso: 173 399 0002

También puede enviar comentarios por escrito o correos electrónicos antes de las 5 p.m. del 21 de diciembre de 2020. Los comentarios por escrito deben enviarse a:

Byron Brown
City of Winston-Salem DOT
P.O. Box 2511, Winston-Salem NC 27102

Por correo electrónico: byronb@cityofws.org

El aviso público de las actividades de transporte público y el tiempo establecido para la revisión pública y los comentarios sobre el TIP satisfarán los requisitos del programa de proyectos (POP). Las personas que necesiten disposiciones especiales, incluida la asistencia con el idioma, para asistir a esta reunión deben comunicarse con Byron Brown (byronb@cityofws.org, 336-747-6871) con al menos 48 horas de anticipación.

La grabación de esta reunión está disponible para su visualización en:

[https://cityofws.webex.com/cityofws/ldr.php?
RCID=4336646470034b3db1e05743d834a75a](https://cityofws.webex.com/cityofws/ldr.php?RCID=4336646470034b3db1e05743d834a75a)

Password: mGQ3SNmN



APPENDIX C - LIST OF ACRONYMS

ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
AMPO: Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations
CAA: Clean Air Act
CFR: Code of Federal Regulations
CMP: Congestion Management Process
CO: Carbon Monoxide
DOT: Department of Transportation
EJ: Environmental Justice
FAST: Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act
FHWA: Federal Highway Administration
FTA: Federal Transit Administration
FY: Fiscal Year
HSIP: Highway Safety Improvement Program
ITS: Intelligent Transportation Systems
LEP: Limited-English-Proficiency
M&O: Management and Operations
MAP-21: Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century
MPA: Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization
MTP: Metropolitan Transportation Plan
NAAQS: National Ambient Air Quality Standards
NO₂: Nitrogen Dioxide
O₃: Ozone
PM₁₀ and PM_{2.5}: Particulate Matter
SHSP: Strategic Highway Safety Plan
STBG-DA: Surface Transportation Block Grant - Direct Attributable
STIP: State Transportation Improvement Program
TDM: Travel Demand Management
TIP: Transportation Improvement Program
TMA: Transportation Management Area
U.S.C.: United States Code
UPWP: Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT: United States Department of Transportation





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