

Hopson Road LRTP Amendment

August 28, 2009

As part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA, or the "stimulus" bill), the NCDOT is looking to expand a project that is realigning the North Carolina Railroad line and grade separating the railroad at Hopson Road in Durham to also include the widening of Hopson Road from 2 lanes to 4 lanes for the two-thirds of a mile between Davis Drive and Miami Boulevard (NC54). Although short and not regionally significant, this road widening was not included in the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan within the jurisdiction of the Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO, so an interagency process will be starting up to determine how best to address this change. The rail realignment and grade separation is TIP project #U-4716 under the auspices of the NCDOT rail division and also incorporates the closure of the nearby Church Street rail crossing and extension of Church Street to tie into Hopson Road, which was TIP project Y-4805B. The Church Street extension is now included in the scope and cost of #U-4716.

Participants (initial list)

Durham-Chapel Hill-Carrboro MPO (adopts the amendment)

Andy Henry, City of Durham Transportation Department, 919.560.4366 ext 30419

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Project Consultant (environmental documentation)

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NCDOT Rail Division (manages project)

Marc Hamel, 733-7245 ext 270, mhamel@ncdot.gov

NCDOT Highway Division 5 (responsible for state roadway interests in Durham County)

Joey Hopkins and/or Wally Bowman, JHopkins@ncdot.gov , wbowman@ncdot.gov

North Carolina Railroad (owns right-of-way)

Catherine Campbell, 954-7601, catherinecampbell@ncrr.com

Triangle Transit (interest in project design as it may influence public transit in the corridor)

Greg Northcutt, Director of Capital Development, 485-74, gnorthcutt@triangletransit.org

Triangle J Council of Governments (manages the Interagency Consultation Process)

John Hodges-Copple, Planning Director, 919.558.9320, johnhc@tjcog.org

State & Federal Interagency Partners (agree on process and approve results)

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Time Frame

The time frame is to be determined at an Interagency Consultation Meeting which is slated for September 4, 2009 at 9:30 am at the Triangle J Council of Governments. Environmental documentation for the project is on hold until the amendment is finalized. States submitted "pre-applications" for ARRA projects in July and full applications were due by August 24. These projects were grouped by track – meaning the phase that the project is in, i.e. final design/construction, PE/NEPA, planning, programs, etc. Hopson was submitted as a track 1 final design/construction project. The funds are supposed to be obligated no later than September 30, 2010 for track 1 projects (for details on the ARRA process for the Federal Railroad Administration, see: http://www.fra.dot.gov/Downloads/RRDev/fr_hsipr_guidance.pdf)

Issues to be Addressed (initial list)

1. Verify that the LRTP amendment will be to add 2 projects for 2015 to the list in Appendix 1 that describes each road project in the DCHC jurisdiction. No other parts of the report will need to be changed. The total cost for the two projects (\$10 million) is within the level of precision of the fiscal constraint analysis. There are no changes for CAMPO or rural areas, therefore, action will only be needed by DCHC MPO and the state and federal partners.
2. Clarify that because the project is short and not regionally significant, no emissions analysis will need to be undertaken; the effort will be an administrative process to amend the DCHC MPO 2035 LRTP.
3. Decide how the plan document should note this change (a new appendix listing amendments?) and what the state and federal partners need to see in regards to the amendment.
4. Schedule to accomplish the amendment.
5. Are there similar rail crossing projects in the Triangle Ozone Maintenance Area that need to be addressed?

Conformity Conclusion (current understanding)

The project needs to be added to the DCHC 2035 LRTP (including all the planning requirements for adding a project to the LRTP), but for conformity would not require a new regional emissions analysis (because it is not regionally significant). It would require an administrative conformity determination process (i.e., Interagency Consultation meeting to discuss, public review/comment period, documentation related to the LRTP change, agency review and the USDOT conformity determination).