



Charlotte City Council
Transportation Planning Environment Committee
Summary Minutes
May 18, 2020

COMMITTEE AGENDA TOPICS

Clarifying the Mission of: City Council's Transportation, Planning and Environment Committee,
Charlotte Moves Task Force
4th Street Bus Pilot
Growth and Infrastructure
Tree Canopy Action Plan

COMMITTEE INFORMATION

Committee Members Present: Julie Eiselt (Chair), Larken Egleston (Vice Chair), Ed Driggs, Matt Newton, Braxton Winston,

Staff Resources: Taiwo Jaiyeoba, City Manager's Office

Meeting Duration: 10:33 am – 12:02 pm

ATTACHMENTS

1. Clarifying the Mission of: City Council's Transportation, Planning and Environment Committee – Mayor Pro Tem Eiselt
2. Charlotte Moves Task Force – Sarah Hazel
3. 4th Street Bus Pilot – John Lewis
4. Growth and Infrastructure
5. Tree Canopy Action Plan

DISCUSSION HIGHLIGHTS

Clarifying the Mission of: City Council's Transportation, Planning and Environment Committee –

Assistant City Manager/Planning Design and Development Director Taiwo Jaiyeoba explained the need to update the existing Transportation Planning and Environment Committee charge. The existing charge does not reflect the addition of the environment portion that has been added to the committee. A proposal was made to revise the statement to include three things, the mobility network, the comprehensive plan, and how all of this influences the environment.

Proposed change: *The Committee reviews and recommends policies to build and maintain a comprehensive mobility network, develops strategies that create a livable and connected city, advances strategic Energy Action Plans recommendations in achieving an environmentally sustainable city.*

Council Discussion: If we develop strategies to create a livable and connected city that embodies the priorities established in our Strategic Energy Action Plan, we need to demonstrate the connection between the environment and our other responsibilities, and make clear we are doing this because the committee

thinks environmental issues are important, and the intention is to make it part of all the other things that are part of this committee. The changes need to reflect that this committee represents the integration of planning, transportation and environment.

The proposed changes will be revised and circulated to the Committee.

Charlotte Moves Task Force-

Sarah Hazel presented an update on the Charlotte Moves Task Force. The task force was formed to address mobility and transportation issues in Charlotte. The first task force meeting was held May 14, 2020.

Task Force Background;

December 2019; Mayor Lyles announced task force to be formed.

January 2020; Council formalized task force, importance to be placed on reliable, efficient public transportation; pedestrian and bicycle paths as well as traffic signalization.

February 2020; 25 key community representatives appointed from a cross section of backgrounds and experiences, with Mayor Harvey Gantt chairing the group.

May 2020 – December 2020; The task force to meet monthly to shape the Strategic Mobility Plan vision and recommend a catalytic network of projects and funding strategy to Council.

Primary Goals:

1. Civic Engagement
2. Review Existing Plans
3. Assess Mobility Needs
4. Determine Funding Needs
5. Recommend Mobility Network to City Council

The first Task Force meeting discussion and presentations centered around; task force charge, Charlotte Future 2040 Comprehensive Plan, an overview of the City's Strategic Mobility Plan and the Strategic Energy Action Plan. Implementation of the plan that aligns with the goals of the Charlotte Future 2040 Plan, SEAP and others, including the mission of the Charlotte Moves Task Force.

Task Force Website and input can be found on the City's YouTube and Facebook pages, ongoing comments can be found at charlottenmoves@charlottenc.gov and on the website is located at https://charlottenc.gov/Mayor/Charlotte_Moves_Task_Force

Timeline: The task force aligns with both the Strategic Mobility Plan and the Charlotte Future 2040 Plan as they continue in the implementation process. Looking ahead to the next meeting; June 23, 2020; the goals will be to drill down into existing policies and programs such as 2030 Transit Plan; Charlotte Walks, Charlotte Bikes and the Capital Investment Plan.

Committee and other Council members will be sent notification of future Task Force meetings as well as a one-page summary after each meeting is held.

4th Street Bus Pilot –

John Lewis updated the Committee on the combined CATS/CDOT bus bike lane pilot on East 4th Street, which created a single combined bus/bike lane from McDowell Street to the Charlotte Transportation Center. This pilot had such positive feedback from both a rider and mobility stand point that the pilot has been continued. With the repaving of 4th street this bus/bike lane will come with permanence in the future.

CATS and CDOT partnered to identify potential corridors to pilot a bus only lane. Corridors were analyzed to look at a variety of metrics including; bus ridership, bus frequency, traffic volumes and potential impacts and capacity of the roadway. The corridor selection process was a data driven process. Corridors were analyzed to look at a variety of metrics before the pilot street was selected. Two corridors came to light out of the process; Central Avenue and 4th Street. The Central Avenue location met all the criteria but presented a challenge with a bottleneck at the Plaza Midwood freight rail line, which was a significant obstacle, therefore, 4th Street was chosen as the pilot.

4th Street had a high bus frequency per hour/390 weekday trips, had a high proximity to major destinations, had a lower impact to traffic volumes. The benefits and purpose of 4th Street would mitigate traffic congestion, improve bus travel time and reliability as well as emphasize safety separating bus traffic from personal vehicle traffic. The right lane of 4th Street is restricted to CATS Buses, school buses, bicycles, scooters and emergency vehicles.

Operation results showed; buses traveled over 30% faster and on time performance at the transit center improved. Survey results showed; 15% of riders would increase their transit usage if more bus lanes were implemented, 83% of Cyclist felt an improved sense of safety and comfort. And, 76% of bus operators would like the lane to become permanent.

CDOT incorporated additional bike improvements through uptown. There was the opportunity to utilize new technology, two floating bus stops were instituted at 4th and Church and 4th and Tryon that enable the bike lane to remain through the corridor and reduce conflicts between buses and bicyclists. The floating bus stop moves out into the bike lane and allows the bike traffic to continue. Bicyclists must yield to pedestrians boarding the bus. We are looking at other corridors through the city to add additional treatments like bus only lanes, que jumpers, greater utilization of transit signal priority and other adjustments and amenities.

Growth and Infrastructure

Ed McKinney gave a brief overview of the Growth and Infrastructure Investment presentation due to limited time remaining in the meeting, a more detailed presentation will be given at the June 22,2020 Committee meeting. Growth and Infrastructure investment is a referral to the Committee by the Mayor from December 2019. Staff took some time to think through new action that could be taken to more effectively think through the relationship in the growth we are seeing and the mitigation and the transportation and mobility investment we are making in those areas. Particularly around areas of high growth, new development and rezoning and development growth along our corridors. The three areas of focus are; Strategic Mobility Plan, Strategic Mobility Plan and Bus Priority Study and CDOT Project Planning and Design, mitigation and impacts of development on the infrastructure. The City Manager's proposed Budget has \$14 million in it for congestion mitigation and traffic flow.

Tree Canopy Action Plan

Alyson Craig gave a brief overview also due to the lack of time remaining in the meeting. The more detailed Tree Canopy Action Plan will be presented at the June 22, 2020 Committee meeting. The Tree Canopy Action Plan is intended to be a companion document to the 2040 Comprehensive Plan. This plan will be guided by the vision and values of the Charlotte future 2040 plan. The Tree Canopy plan will inform tree policy and future regulations alongside the City's effort to plan for the future. This is an important part of implementing the Urban Forestry Master Plan, the tree canopy plan is one step in doing that. Tim Porter, City Arborist, has joined the Planning Department as the Chief Urban Forester where he will be overseeing the Tree Canopy policies.

Meeting adjourned at 12:02 p.m.