



CONNECT/MTP Linkage

Work Group Report

July, 2015



Vibrant Communities – Robust Region

The CONNECT Our Future Regional Growth Framework was developed for the 14-county greater Charlotte, NC region over a three-year period from 2012 to 2014. The process used involved broad and robust community engagement and built upon the communities' and residents' aspirations for the future of our region. One of the products of CONNECT was a "Toolbox" (<http://www.connectourfuture.org/tools/>) that contains approximately 80 tools that can be used by individuals, communities, and organizations, in helping to create a vibrant and sustainable future for the Charlotte region.

The Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization, or CRTPO (transportation planning agency) is required every four years to develop a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) for its service area which includes Mecklenburg, Iredell, and a major portion of Union County within the Charlotte region. The MTP is federally-mandated and contains a 20-plus year look at regional transportation needs stated in terms of policies, programs, and projects. It identifies a full spectrum of transportation infrastructure needs as well as describes transportation-related issues such as congestion management, health impacts, and the environment. The 2040 MTP (<http://www.crtpo.org/plans-programs/metropolitan-transportation-plan>) will be updated by 2018 as the "2045 MTP".

The tools available through the CONNECT initiative provide a timely opportunity to apply certain of these resources to the MTP update process. As a result, in early 2015, a work group was formed and was provided the following purpose and objective by CRTPO staff:

Purpose: To identify CONNECT outcomes and products to inputs required for the next update of the CRTPO Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Objective: To develop an inventory of strategies and recommendations aimed at identifying CONNECT products that can be reasonably used during the preparation of the *2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)*, that can be considered for approval by the CRTPO Board as part of the MTP process, while at the same time identify means in which future CONNECT processes and products could be tailored to serve the MTP.

The 23-member work group was largely self-selected, with members recruited from four areas:

- Individuals who had participated meaningfully in the CONNECT Our Future process
- Individuals who sit on CRTPO's technical advisory committee (TCC)
- Individuals who had participated meaningfully in development of the 2040 MTP, and
- Staff from key transportation planning agencies within the region

The work group – which met five times between January and June 2015 - was convened by staff from the Charlotte Mecklenburg Planning Department with guidance and technical assistance provided by CRTPO staff. A roster of membership of this group may be found on page 14 of this document.

The approach taken by the work group was fairly simple and straight-forward. Using Survey Monkey, the group's members were polled as to which of the 80 CONNECT Tools had the greatest degree of applicability to the MTP. This exercise required the respondents to have a reasonable degree of familiarity with both the CONNECT Tools and the MTP. The exercise resulted in the identification of nearly half of the Tools by at least one respondent as having applicability to the MTP. The top seven most-frequently selected Tools (those selected by a majority of respondents) were identified for further study, and were:

- Transportation corridor preservation
- Walking & biking audits & planning
- Transportation Demand Management (TDM)
- Freight transportation planning
- Complete streets
- Greenway & trails planning
- Land use modelling

The group was then challenged to look at each of the seven tools in terms of how they could be applied to the MTP in creative or innovative ways. Each Tool was analyzed in this fashion by groups of one or two persons from the work group, who reported back to the group which commented upon and validated the work of the small groups. The result of this work may be found on pages 3 through 9 of this document.

Progress of the work group was periodically reported back by Planning staff to the MTP Steering Team and to the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) whose members both provided feedback. It quickly became apparent from conversations held by the work group as well as with the Steering Team and the TCC that the need existed to develop a series of recommendations in four specific areas that were not represented by the seven identified tools. These areas were:

- Preferred Growth Scenario (PGS)
- Creative/innovative financing
- Public transit
- Municipal (vs. regional) transportation matters

Planning staff compiled the various comments, ideas and suggestions offered in these areas and as part of their process the work group validated the recommendations that resulted (found on pages 10 through 13 of this document).

Taken together, the “Top 7 Tool Templates” and the recommendations on the four issues not related to the seven tools represent the product of the work group’s effort.

CONNECT/MTP Linkage – “Top 7 Tools”

Name of CONNECT Tool: Transportation Corridor Preservation

Why is consideration of this Tool important to the MTP?

- MPOs i.d. transportation facilities on new and existing corridors as a part of CTP and MTP processes.
- Corridors are often identified in rapidly-developing areas for implementation years or even decades into the future. If ROW along new or expanded corridor is encroached upon by development the cost to construct the project increases significantly, and project may be deemed impossible to construct due to impact on the built and human environment.
- Once open to public, corridor capacity and safety can be degraded when the road is used for both local and through traffic, vs. using access management and connectivity principles to reduce reliance on the road for all access and local trips.

How can the Tool be applied to (or used in) the MTP (emphasizing “new or different ways”)?

- New corridors (particularly one built without controlled access) are likely to change the distribution of growth in an area which may not necessarily result in “new” growth, but certainly will affect where growth is occurring.
- MPO may choose to establish minimum standards for ROW preservation, access management, and connectivity as a part of new development, rezoning, and subdivision review before the MPO will consider ranking a project within the MTP or STIP.
- MPO Board could choose to approve policy requiring these minimums to be met in order for candidate projects to be evaluated by the MPO for inclusion in the MTP.

What resources (publications, agencies, programs) are available that could illustrate or demonstrate the importance or the applicability of this Tool to the MTP?

- The New Jersey Department of Transportation has developed a Future In Transportation (FIT) program to build partnerships to invest in communities that engage in effective land use planning (<http://www.state.nj.us/transportation/works/njit/faq.shtm>). This program includes a range of strategies to improve safety, local vitality, multi-modal options, and effective project implementation.
- Locally, the Town of Huntersville, City of Charlotte, and other MPO members already reference the CTP as a part of their land development review processes. In addition, York County references Pennies for Progress project right of way requirements in their zoning and subdivision ordinances.
- Resources referenced under “Resources” in the CONNECT toolbox www.connectourfuture.org/tools/transportation-corridor-preservation/

How would inclusion of this information in the MTP advance CONNECT goals?

- MPO can use project ranking processes to encourage its members to develop effective land use plans and development regulations that direct growth consistent with the community’s vision.
- MPO’s ranking processes would likewise ensure projects on new alignments are not scored as highly where there is a reasonable likelihood that the corridor will be encroached upon due to uncontrolled development where the encroachment could have been prevented consistent with applicable laws.

CONNECT/MTP Linkage – “Top 7 Tools”

Name of CONNECT Tool: Walking and Bicycle Audits and Planning

Why is consideration of this Tool important to the MTP?

- MPOs & planners must understand barriers and design issues related to corridor accommodations, hazards and connectivity for cyclists/pedestrians.
- Population growth and incremental transportation improvements have direct impacts on the safety (real and perceived), accessibility, and convenience of bicycle and pedestrian routes.
- Active transportation is a critical element of Transportation Demand Management.
- Bike & ped audits must be objective and consistent to accurately assess current usage levels of facilities and to provide reliable ongoing analysis of how facilities use changes over time. Tools to document usage and interactions with facilities are needed to quantify outcomes and the need for further investment and prioritization for both stand-alone bike-ped projects and bike-ped elements of highway projects.

How can the Tool be applied to (or used in) the MTP (emphasizing “new or different ways”)?

- Goal 2 of 2040 MTP is “Encourage walking, bicycling and transit options, integrated with motor vehicle transportation, by providing a transportation system that serves the public with mobility choices.”
- Tool can assess how previous bike and pedestrian facilities investments have resulted in increased usage and/or safety, and whether current facilities are meeting residents’ mobility needs (there is a lack of consistent auditing to show those success outcomes).
- Tool can be used to determine current usage, safety, and transportation patterns on planned facilities and to quantify changes pre and post construction and offer safety impacts of the same.

What resources (publications, agencies, programs) are available that could illustrate or demonstrate the importance or the applicability of this Tool to the MTP?

- Several tools and instructions available in public domain to craft manual counts at intersections: <http://www.ctre.iastate.edu/PUBS/traffichandbook/3TrafficCounts.pdf>.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Program at ITRE (NC State) focuses on improving the walk- and bike-ability of communities through research, technical assistance, dissemination of current best practices in facilities design, and training.
- Asheville works with [advocacy groups](#) to complete bike counts as part of National Bicycle and Pedestrian Documentation Project. Such an approach in our region would improve public buy-in on bicycle and pedestrian planning and assessment.
- Resources referenced under “Resources” in the CONNECT toolbox www.connectourfuture.org/tools/walking-and-bicycle-audits-and-planning/

How would inclusion of this information in the MTP advance CONNECT goals?

- Will help prioritize and justify bicycle and pedestrian projects in the TIP, STIP and other ranking and evaluation methodologies for funding.
- Will help address mismatch between resident needs and current funding (% funding proposed in STIP for bike/ped projects in the CONNECT region is far lower than estimated 30% of residents who do not drive a motor vehicle).
- Can be used in districts and neighborhoods, institutions, and municipalities.
- Addresses CONNECT priorities: improve access to parks and open spaces, increase transportation choices, and support our communities. Tool aligns particularly well with stated CONNECT core values: **A Strong, Diverse Economy:** As our region faces unprecedented growth, we need to provide the facilities that an increasingly mobile young workforce demands, including bikeable and walkable transportation routes. **A Safe and Healthy Environment:** Transportation by walking and biking produces no pollution. **Enhanced Social Equity:** Walking and Biking are very low-cost transportation modes available to virtually all residents including the elderly, handicapped, children, and low-income residents, yet existing bike/ped facilities don’t meet the needs of all those groups. **Sustainable, Well-Managed Growth:** Communities built on a scale that allows walking and biking reduce the need for auto-dependence and accompanying sprawl.

CONNECT/MTP Linkage – “Top 7 Tools”

Name of CONNECT Tool: Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

Why is consideration of this Tool important to the MTP?

- TDM is an efficient way to optimize existing infrastructure without incurring excessive costs.

How can the Tool be applied to (or used in) the MTP (emphasizing “new or different ways”)?

- Transportation demand management would contribute to each of the MTP goals:
 - *Provide a safe, sustainable transportation system* - contributes to sustainable infrastructure by optimizing movement on our existing transportation system.
 - *Encourage an integrated multi-modal transportation system* - TDM promotes a variety of multi-modal transportation options ranging from carpooling and transit to biking and walking.
 - *Improve quality of life, community health, and the natural environment* - TDM improves community health and reduces air pollution by reducing the number of single occupancy vehicles on the road, increasing transit ridership numbers, and helping to educate commuters on more efficient ways to get to work.
 - *Promote transportation equity for all populations* - by promoting alternatives to single occupancy vehicle trips, TDM simultaneously reduces commuting costs.
 - *Encourage regional collaboration and transportation and land use integration* - TDM works with partners across a region to connect commuters. It works to utilize existing transit nodes and to identify potential carpool pools, van pools, and bicycle commuting options. TDM is an asset to a region because it facilitates a cross jurisdictional approach for commuters.
 - *Support economic competitiveness* - TDM helps to reduce congestion on roadways and improve ridership numbers of transit. This will help to make the Charlotte region more attractive for businesses because transportation assistance is a benefit to employers and employees.
 - *Maximize opportunities for movement of people and goods* - optimizes the number of people of goods that can be moved on existing infrastructure.
- Fundamentally, the benefits to users should be articulated in terms of dollars and cents savings.
- TDM should be viewed in terms of both temporary mitigation of congestion during construction projects as well as permanent solutions.

What resources (publications, agencies, programs) are available that could illustrate or demonstrate the importance or the applicability of this Tool to the MTP?

- NCDOT TDM Plan <http://ncdot.gov/nctransit/download/TDMPlan.pdf>
- Center for Urban Transportation Research <http://www.cutr.usf.edu/programs-1/transportation-demand-management-2/>
- San Joaquin Valley Commute Connection <http://www.commuteconnection.com/incentives.htm>
- Resources referenced under “Resources” in the CONNECT toolbox www.connectourfuture.org/tools/transportation-demand-management/

How would inclusion of this information in the MTP advance CONNECT goals?

- TDM is a regional approach to reducing congestion and improving the environment.
- TDM exists in the region in an uncoordinated fashion; little apparent coordination among various efforts; Campaign for Clean Air (Atlanta) might be used as a model

CONNECT/MTP Linkage – “Top 7 Tools”

Name of CONNECT Tool: Freight Transportation Planning

Why is consideration of this Tool important to the MTP?

- In general, freight movements have a direct impact on passenger rail and highway movements.
- Chapter 17 of the current MTP is dedicated to freight. Alignment with the CONNECT Freight Transportation Planning tool primarily means:
 - more emphasis on the integration of land use and freight,
 - developing land use options for use across the MPO (ordinance language, policies, strategies, etc.) to address freight development,
 - a focus on local capacity building regarding freight logistics and how freight impacts, and is impacted by, local land use decisions,
 - developing a public-private, multi-jurisdictional collaborative that will champion freight initiatives, freight-friendly policies, and projects,
 - understanding the regional project needs to ensure economic competitiveness and having the base data and performance metrics available to justify needed projects/improvements.

How can the Tool be applied to (or used in) the MTP (emphasizing “new or different ways”)?

- Identify land use and freight conflicts and methods for addressing those conflicts.
- Develop a performance measures for freight transportation (percent of on-time shipments, traffic incidents, etc.) to inform decisions on capacity and future demand and need.
- Integrate the freight advisory committee input and recommendations into a broader range of transportation related issues.
- Develop strategies to address freight impacts on vulnerable communities (ie. Environmental Justice communities).
- Develop strategies to balance passenger and freight traffic

What resources (publications, agencies, programs) are available that could illustrate or demonstrate the importance or the applicability of this Tool to the MTP?

- Resources referenced under “Resources” in the CONNECT toolbox
www.connectourfuture.org/tools/freight-transportation-planning/

How would inclusion of this information in the MTP advance CONNECT goals?

- The integration of freight planning and land use planning at the local level through consistent guidelines provided by the MTP.
- Link the MTP to the CONNECT website as a resource for freight planning and for other MPOs in the region.

CONNECT/MTP Linkage – “Top 7 Tools”

Name of CONNECT Tool: Complete Streets

Why is consideration of this Tool important to the MTP?

- Acknowledge that Complete Streets help support other community goals such as improving air quality and supporting public transit
- Complete Streets should also be embedded into future editions of the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP)
- Complete Streets policies are already contained within the 2040 MTP (pages 15-1 through 15-18) including MTP goal of “integrated multimodal transportation system with mobility options”

How can the Tool be applied to (or used in) the MTP (emphasizing “new or different ways”)?

- Reference (where applicable) the CONNECT Tools site in MTP
- Identify common obstacles to adopting local Complete Streets policies and discuss means of overcoming those obstacles
- Highlight performance measures (a la MAP-21) for Complete Streets as contained on page 38 of Smart Growth America “Complete Streets Local Policy Workbook” posted under “using the tool” on the Tools page

What resources (publications, agencies, programs) are available that could illustrate or demonstrate the importance or the applicability of this Tool to the MTP?

- NCDOT Division of Bicycle & Pedestrian Transportation, including:
 - Statewide bicycle/pedestrian plan
 - Complete Streets (policy) & guidelines
 - Safe Routes to Schools (state & national)
- Pedestrian & Bicycle Information Center (FHWA) www.pedbikeinfo.org
- Can applicable research be identified that supports Complete Streets in terms of improvement in air quality, increases in property values, reduced traffic congestion, enhanced public health, improved bike/ped safety, reduction in vehicular crashes, reduction in speeding, improved mobility, etc.? Check out *Walkable City* by Jeff Speck as resource that ties Complete Streets to achieving community goals (<http://us.macmillan.com/walkablecity/JeffSpeck>).
- Explore research into data that exists on roads pre- and post-road diet (safety, achieving other community goals)
- Resource libraries: PeopleForBikes.org and bikeswalkalliance.org (Alliance for Biking and Walking)
- Resources referenced under “Resources” in the CONNECT toolbox www.connectourfuture.org/tools/complete-streets/

How would inclusion of this information in the MTP advance CONNECT goals?

- Post Complete Streets ordinance on CONNECT Tools site (include users guide to implement policy)
- Post an inventory of municipalities in region with bike/ped plans and adopted Complete Streets policies or ordinances (include contact staff names) on CONNECT Tools site
- Post or link Bike/Ped/Greenway chapter of MTP on CONNECT Tools site
- A description should be developed as to when it’s most appropriate for localities to adopt Complete Streets
 - Policies
 - Guidelines
 - Ordinances
 - Plans

What are the difference among and the strengths and limitations of each?

CONNECT/MTP Linkage – “Top 7 Tools”

Name of CONNECT Tool: Greenways and Trails Planning

Why is consideration of this Tool important to the MTP?

- MTP must address balanced multi-modal transportation plan so needs of non-motorized transportation are key.
- Planning for greenways & trails (some label as “recreational” facilities) is critical to improving & expanding transportation network specific to walking & bicycling and represent arguably the best mechanism to increase & attract non-motorized commuting, and lessen dependence on single occupant vehicle use.
- Easy accessibility for non-motorized travel helps meet public health and social equity goals of MTP.

How can the Tool be applied to (or used in) the MTP (emphasizing “new or different ways”)?

- Consider adopting regional trail networks (e.g. Carolina Thread Trail Regional Greenway) as part of bike/ped MTP element. Submitted projects reflecting implementation of this network could be considered higher priority given connection to system with regional context.
- Review and align Mecklenburg, Union and Iredell greenway plans to ensure consistency/compatibility
- Tools that could be used to assist in elevating greenway projects submitted for inclusion in the MTP include:
 - *Local Development Code:* Municipalities can require through development approvals that developments, especially those located in a planned greenway corridor, incorporate the necessary greenway provision to connect to an existing facility or planned greenway corridor.
 - *Rail Preservation Policy:* Policies aimed at identifying and monitoring status of railroad corridors heightens chance of eventual corridor acquisition for rail-trail greenway facility conversion. A railroad status map can be incorporated into MTP and MPO can monitor corridors’ status. MPO can partner with Rails to Trails Conservancy to receive “early warning system” updates on rail corridors re. abandonments. (Ex.: City of Shelby, NC is coordinating with Norfolk Southern on 12-mile section anticipated for abandonment. The corridor has already been added to its network, and the greenways map in the MTP will be modified to reflect this.
 - *Complete Streets:* Complete Streets policy can direct implementation of needed greenways facilities as part road construction or reconstruction projects to possibly include incorporation of facility to link to the greenway network during roadway widening, or ensuring adequate ROW for co-locating greenways when undertaking corridor preservation for future roadways.

The MPO may also consider incorporation of one or more of these tools into ranking criteria for future greenway project submission for the STIP/MTP.

What resources (publications, agencies, programs) are available that could illustrate or demonstrate the importance or the applicability of this Tool to the MTP?

- Adoption of greenway policies in local development codes can ensure greenway segments get built via. land development process. When considering greenway projects for STIP/MTP inclusion, MPO could evaluate them based on whether local communities have local ordinances that address greenway implementation.
- Other resources:
 - Boca Raton, Florida has language requiring greenway construction in developments.
https://www.municode.com/library/fl/boca_raton/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=VOII_CH23PLDE_ARTI_VDERE_DIV4SIBI_S23-163SHEPAP0
 - Broward MPO in South Florida has adopted the Broward County Complete Streets
www.browardmpo.org/services/complete-streets-guidelines
- Resources referenced under “Resources” in the CONNECT toolbox
www.connectourfuture.org/tools/transportation-corridor-preservation/

How would inclusion of this information in the MTP advance CONNECT goals?

- The mechanisms described can help to advance the expansion of a greenway network that results in improving transportation choices that provide connectivity among and between neighborhoods and communities that include a variety of destinations.
- Improved accommodations for non-motorized travel allow the opportunity for active transportation and recreation, which has direct public health benefits.
- Greenways are seen as a tool by which a natural resource can be protected, such as stream buffers, open space and woodlands. It helps to achieve the goal of connecting people to nature. This heightens the awareness and appreciation people have for the natural environment and the need to protect it.

CONNECT/MTP Linkage – “Top 7 Tools”

Name of CONNECT Tool: Land Use Modeling

Why is consideration of this Tool important to the MTP?

- Land Use is one of the primary inputs into the Regional Travel Demand Model.
- Land Use Modeling can help residents and elected officials visualize and compare the impacts of land use change and help them to make decisions of which transportation improvements are best for that preferred land use pattern.

How can the Tool be applied to (or used in) the MTP (emphasizing “new or different ways”)?

- The CONNECT process used CommunityViz to model the future land use in the region and the next MTP Update will start with this model and refine it in the area covered by the Regional Travel Demand Model.

What resources (publications, agencies, programs) are available that could illustrate or demonstrate the importance or the applicability of this Tool to the MTP?

- Resources referenced under “Resources” in the CONNECT toolbox
www.connectourfuture.org/tools/land-use-modeling/

How would inclusion of this information in the MTP advance CONNECT goals?

- By using CommunityViz in the next MTP Update, a clear progression from the CONNECT process into regional transportation planning is made.
- A revised travel model could also be used by any future CONNECT updates.

OTHER FOUR “NON-TOOLS” ISSUES CONNECT/MTP Linkage

Preferred Growth Scenario (PGS)

- In addition to using the growth patterns represented in the PGS in updating the regional socio-economic projections, the PGS should be considered for use in additional ways in developing the 2045 MTP. Several suggestions follow.
- Given the amount of effort put into revising the project prioritization method leading up to the 2040 MTP, it is felt that significantly modifying the method again at this time to accommodate the PGS would not be warranted.
 - There are advantages to the existing method in that it aligns with the state-prescribed methodology.
 - A parallel process should instead be considered that could be used in tandem with the existing method. This process could for instance assign bonus points for consistency of projects with the PGS. Perhaps this approach could be tested as part of the 2045 MTP, and then considered as part of some future prioritization method revision.
 - Another approach to be considered could be to use the PGS as part of the qualitative measures used in Tier II of the MTP scoring process.
- Other regional planning efforts elsewhere (particularly those communities that took advantage of the regional planning grant and those regions that have utilized CommunityViz) should be explored to determine where and how the land use element (equivalent to the PGS) was used as part of a project prioritization/ranking process. An assessment should be made as to other models' applicability to the MTP.
- CommunityViz and the PGS should be tested as to their ability to identify “hot spots”; in other words to identify geographies where there is a mismatch between where growth has occurred/is occurring/will occur and where transportation infrastructure is/will be lacking to accommodate that growth (particularly in light of planned/proposed projects).
 - This model – if it can be developed – can be used to identify prospective projects (if they aren't already nominated by participating municipalities).
 - This task should be undertaken early on in the 2045 MTP process in that may be connected to project identification and project prioritization (discussed above) and therefore its applicability needs to be established quickly AND since if there are mis-matches between the PGS “hot spots” and MTP funding priorities they need to be properly aligned; if no mis-matches are discovered it could help establish how and when (or if) to adjust the project prioritization process.
- Consideration should be given to using the PGS “build out” scenario in order to determine what transportation infrastructure would be necessary to support this scenario. This needed infrastructure should in turn be compared against the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP) in order to determine whether projects needed to be added to the CTP. Moving forward, MTP/CTP alignment should be acknowledged.
- While the MTP project ranking must be financially-constrained and therefore in large measure is “formula-driven”, it should also be somewhat visionary, challenging readers to test traditional assumptions while recognizing emerging trends.

OTHER FOUR “NON-TOOLS” ISSUES CONNECT/MTP Linkage

Creative/Innovative Financing

- A discussion should be included in the MTP of emerging nationwide and world-wide trends in financing of public infrastructure (notably transportation infrastructure), and how the CRTPO region might best position itself to take advantage of those trends.
- The MTP should be considered as a vehicle for kick-starting a regional discussion with the proper mix of partners on the matter of creative funding of transportation projects.
- In particular, an assessment of the “value capture” method should be conducted to serve as a means of financing projects.
 - If projects can be justified based on their projected economic value to adjoining properties and municipalities, the additional value can be captured to fund the projects.
 - Regarding the above, the method that the NCDOT uses to model “value capture” should be evaluated to determine the degree to which it may be contrary to community goals by identifying projects that promote sprawl.
- A mechanism should be developed that allows projects that might be candidates for creative financing to be considered for implementation without compromising the prioritization process used with STI.
- A strategy or approach should be developed that engages property owners and municipalities in consensus-building to ensure that potentially-affected stakeholders are sufficiently engaged in the development process (planning, design, delivery) of projects funded with creative financing (lessons may be learned about outreach and engagement from projects such as the CATS Red Line and I-77 P3).

OTHER FOUR “NON-TOOLS” ISSUES CONNECT/MTP Linkage

Public Transit

- Given the expanding population and geography of the CRTPO region, it needs to be recognized that the “regional transit vision” must extend well beyond Mecklenburg County and beyond existing transit planning efforts, geographies and philosophies.
 - The MTP must reflect that greater regional transit vision and not simply be an update of the transit element contained in the 2040 MTP.
 - Ideally, the MTP transit planning work and updates to the public transit agencies’ transit planning efforts can occur simultaneously and with extensive coordination in order to maximize consistency and minimize duplication.
- A dialogue also should be initiated with staffs from agencies involved in planning and delivery of transit services from throughout the CRTPO geography to determine the scope of transit planning (including and especially the anticipated update of the CATS 2040 Corridor Plan). The goal of such dialogue should be to:
 - Determine to what degree this transit planning effort intends to reflect the transit vision contained in CONNECT
 - Determine the degree of alignment between and among transit planning efforts to identify gaps/overlaps/conflicts
- An effort should therefore be made to identify an appropriate “point person” (or organization) that can function as a de-facto regional transit planning agency.
- An approach also needs to be developed (and implemented) that serves to coordinate regional transit planning within the context of the MTP’s being developed by the MPO’s throughout the CONNECT region that will result in
 - seamlessness between and among transit elements of the individual MTP’s and
 - development of a regional transit vision (ideally) consistent with CONNECT goals
- A comparison should be made between the CONNECT transit recommendations for the CRTPO area, and the recommended transit projects contained in the Comprehensive Transportation Plan (CTP). If the CONNECT recommendations are more ambitious, consideration should be given to adding the components from CONNECT that are absent from the CTP, into the CTP. These in turn could be considered for inclusion into the MTP.
- This in turn would require the next Comprehensive Transportation Plan (when updated) to be reflective of the (unconstrained) regional transit vision (keeping in mind that CTP = unconstrained, and MTP = financially-constrained).

OTHER FOUR “NON-TOOLS” ISSUES
CONNECT/MTP Linkage

Municipal (as opposed to regional) transportation matters

- While MTP is a regional transportation planning effort, given the recognized nexus between transportation and land use planning, authority for much of its implementation (land use planning, zoning, transportation corridor preservation, subdivision regulation, etc.) lies at the municipal (rather than at the regional) level; the MTP should therefore prescribe or suggest certain strategies that can be implemented by municipal partners under different circumstances without dictating or imposing them.
- The MTP – in cooperation with CONNECT – should mutually:
 - identify model wording for relevant local policies, codes, guidelines and ordinances that municipalities can choose to adopt (or to modify and adopt) to address these implementation steps.
 - identify implementation guides for municipalities interested in adopting these regulations.
 - develop a guide that illustrates the different types of local regulatory tools (e.g. code, ordinance, guideline, policy) describing their differences, and illustrating when (and under what circumstances) each is appropriate to be considered for adoption (for instance, guidelines and policies aren't mandatory while codes and ordinances are).

All these documents should be posted on the appropriate sections of the CONNECT Tools website and referenced in the MTP.

- It should be recognized that this is as much an MTP matter as it is a CTP matter. In a much broader context, deliberate attention needs to be paid to the overall alignment and consistency between future MTP's and CTP's.

Work Group Members: CONNECT/MTP Linkage	
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Geoff Steele	Vice-chair Huntersville Greenway Trail & Bikeway Commission
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