

**Minutes
Town of Benson
Community Transportation Plan Steering Committee
Monday, March 11, 2019
7:00 PM**

Present:

**Jay McInnis, Ramey, Kemp & Assoc.
Jerry Medlin, Mayor**

**Dennis Jernigan, Resident
Jimmy Eatmon, NCDOT**

**Matt Zapp, Town Manager
Kenneth Edwards, Police Chief
Alan Johnson, Fire Chief
Lauren Shepard, Admin Assistant**

**Tim Robbins, Public Works Director
Erin Joseph, Planning Director
Reggie Holley, Resident
Kayla Price, Resident**

**Dale Parker, Parker General Contractors
Dale McLamb, South River Electric
Kevin Hubbard, Johnston County EMS
Chip Gretok, Berry Global
Amy Adams, Acera Wealth Management
Leanne Honrine, Berry Global**

**Kim Price, Dynamite Trailers
Adam Leath, Hampton Inn
James Salmons, Upper Coastal RPO
Varinder Bhardwaj, Exxon Gas Station
Scott Walston, NCDOT**

I. Welcome and Introductions (*Matt Zapp, Town of Benson*)

Matt Zapp welcomed the committee, and led group introductions.

II. Approval of February 11, 2019 Meeting Minutes

Action: Dennis Jernigan made a motion to approve the February 11, 2019 meeting minutes. Amy Adams made a second to the motion. Approved unanimously.

III. CTP Study Area and Vision/Goals Update (*Matt Zapp/Jay McInnis, Ramey, Kemp, and Associates*)

A. CTP Study Area

Matt Zapp explained the study area originally discussed at the February meeting. The focus of the study will encompass the Benson Town limits and the areas outside of town that have an effect on Benson's transportation future.

Jay McInnis presented the following synopsis of the study area:

- Covers 100% of the Benson's ETJ

- The western line of the study area moved in to Harnett County to capture the Hodge's Chapel Road interchange (Exit 77)
- Captures Benson's future ETJ
- The study area is approximately two miles beyond the ETJ. North of the I-95/I-40 interchange (Exit 81) to a point about two miles south of the Four Oaks ETJ.
- The primary purpose of the study is what the needs are in the Benson area for now and the future.
- Discussion of having the CTP timeframe sunset in 2040.

Jay McInnis stated that Benson should consider 2045 as the horizon year for the study to keep it in line with the likely horizon year for the next update to the Johnston County Comprehensive Transportation Plan.

B. Goals for the Committee are:

- Establish timeline of the CTP
- Work to create deliverables that we can recommend to Johnston County
- Encompass the Benson CTP within the Johnston County Transportation Plan for consideration by NCDOT.
- Plan out what Benson will look like in 2030, 2040 and then 2045.

Matt Zapp stated that the committee's goal is to put together a community plan. He asked what else the committee could do to make sure the plan is successful?

Scott Walston stated that NCDOT needs a plan that addresses transportation efficiencies with data demonstrating a need and not a want. **Can the roads support the current traffic?**

Matt Zapp addressed immediate traffic needs:

- The "fly-over" bridge (Market St. extension) will service the area east of I-95, but there is no means to move traffic north and south on the east side of I-95.
- The "fly-over" bridge will terminate on the side of a farm field where the interconnectivity of a two-lane road is without proper shoulder width. Massengill Farm Rd. and Cub Rd. cannot currently accommodate large truck traffic of up to sixty per day.
- Currently, there is no connection direct to Robin Ln. which would take transfer truck traffic south to Exit 77.
- Hampton Inn and two out parcels are ready for potential quick serve and full service restaurants with an average of 800 vehicles using that intersection (NC 242).
- We have the traffic data for NC 242 South and the US 301/NC 50 intersection. The traffic cameras have now been moved to capture data at the Main St./Dunn St. intersection and the Main St./Fayetteville St. intersections.

IV. **Area Transportation Needs Exercise (Review Maps)** *(Group Activity)*

Matt Zapp explained a series of maps posted throughout the meeting room. He asked the committee to review each map, and note any concerns they had from a timeframe of 5-10 years, 10-20 years, and by 2045.

Matt Zapp posed ideas to think about when reviewing the maps including: development of residential and commercial areas and everyday traffic for daily living. He asked the representatives from Johnston County Emergency Management to consider connectivity for emergency vehicles, and where they would envision a 2nd EMS station to service Benson.

Suggestions made by the committee after map review:

- Fire Chief, Alan Johnson – Morgan Rd. is too narrow
- Dennis Jernigan – Would like to see Banner Elk Rd. and Railroad Rd. connected between NC 50 and NC 242. This would offer an East/West connection north of Benson
- Amy Adams – Suggested adding more street lighting on S.E. Railroad St. and S.W. Railroad St. for pedestrian traffic
- Dennis Jernigan – Suggested that any future commercial development on vacant lots be setback away so that the fronts of businesses are not so close to the roadway.
- Dennis Jernigan – Would like to see better pedestrian connectivity between schools, parks, and the Civic Center.
- Straighten the curve on W. Main St. west of the NC 50 split

V. **Continue Goals Discussion/Discuss Public Involvement Plan**

Jay McInnis emphasized the importance of public involvement in this plan's success. He reviewed the draft **Town of Benson 2045 Community Transportation Plan - Public Involvement Plan**.

The goal of the Public Involvement Plan is to make sure that everyone that resides in the study area is aware of the CTP and provided an opportunity for input. This would apply to every person, business, and community group in the CTP study area that has an interest in doing so.

VI. **Wrap up/Action Items** *(Matt Zapp)*

- Provide a map of study area outside the ETJ, identify where utilities are and overlay that with the industrial improvements that are currently underway or in the very near future. This would be a collective growth map where we can capture traffic counts for truck traffic, traffic patterns, and determine alternate truck routes.

- Traffic counts, algorithmic data, and maps will be provided at the April meeting showing the quadrants of that data.
- Additionally, provide a map with the volume to capacity ratio of the roads in the study area including the most recent NCDOT data.

Matt Zapp and Jimmy Eatmon discussed the weight limits for trucks on I-40. Eatmon stated that the weight restrictions for I-40 are strict and tightly enforced. Zapp stated that this weight limit is pushing traffic from I-40, and onto Benson streets. If this limit were made less stringent it would cause an immediate drop in Benson's thru traffic for trucks.

VII. Next Meeting – Monday April 8, 2019 – 7:00 – 9:00pm