

Achieving Consensus in Developing the Charlotte Regional Transportation Planning Organization's Discretionary Projects Policy

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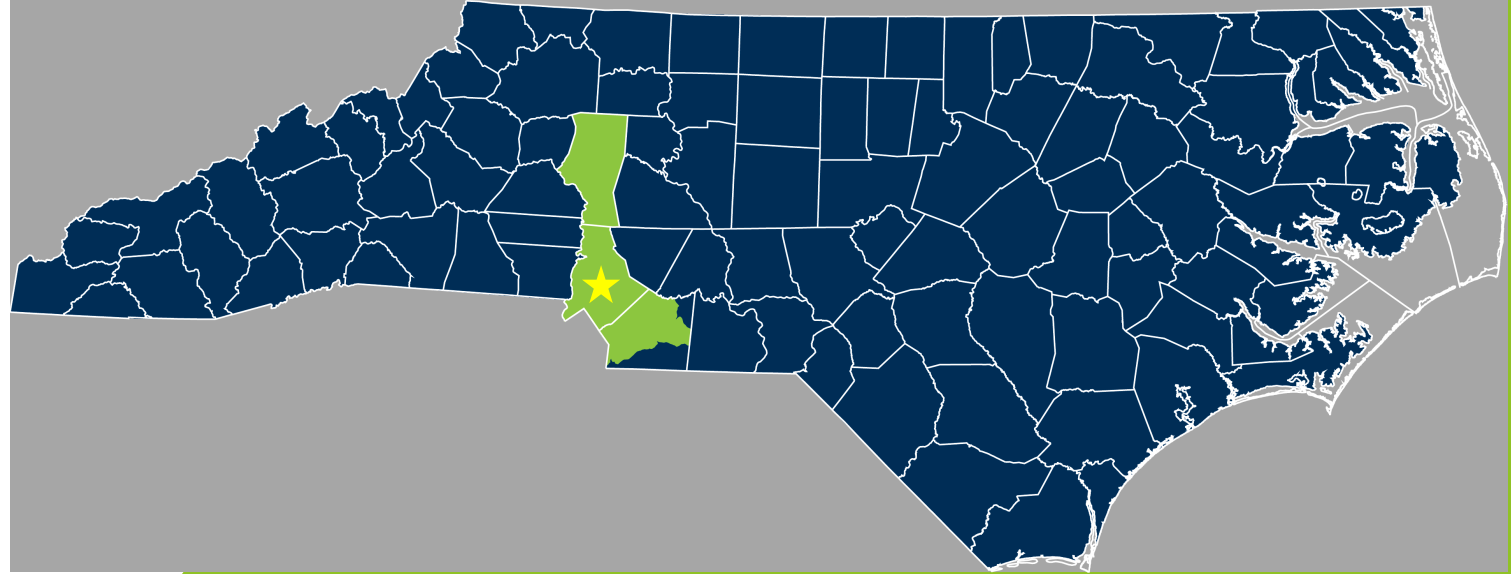
Agenda

CRTPO's Discretionary Projects Policy

- ▶ Part 1: Why Develop a Policy Document?
 - ▶ A growing MPO
 - ▶ A growing portfolio of local projects
 - ▶ CRTPO's Project Oversight Committee
- ▶ Part 2: Developing the Policy Document
 - ▶ Rethinking our approach
 - ▶ Forming a work group & hiring a facilitator
 - ▶ Building consensus
 - ▶ Approval and implementation

A Growing MPO

- ▶ CRTPO is the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Charlotte Urbanized Area
- ▶ 24 jurisdictions, including 3 counties, are included within CRTPO
- ▶ The population within the CRTPO region is approximately 1.4 million
 - ▶ 15% of NC population



A Growing Portfolio of Locally Administered Discretionary Projects

► CRTPO responsibility:

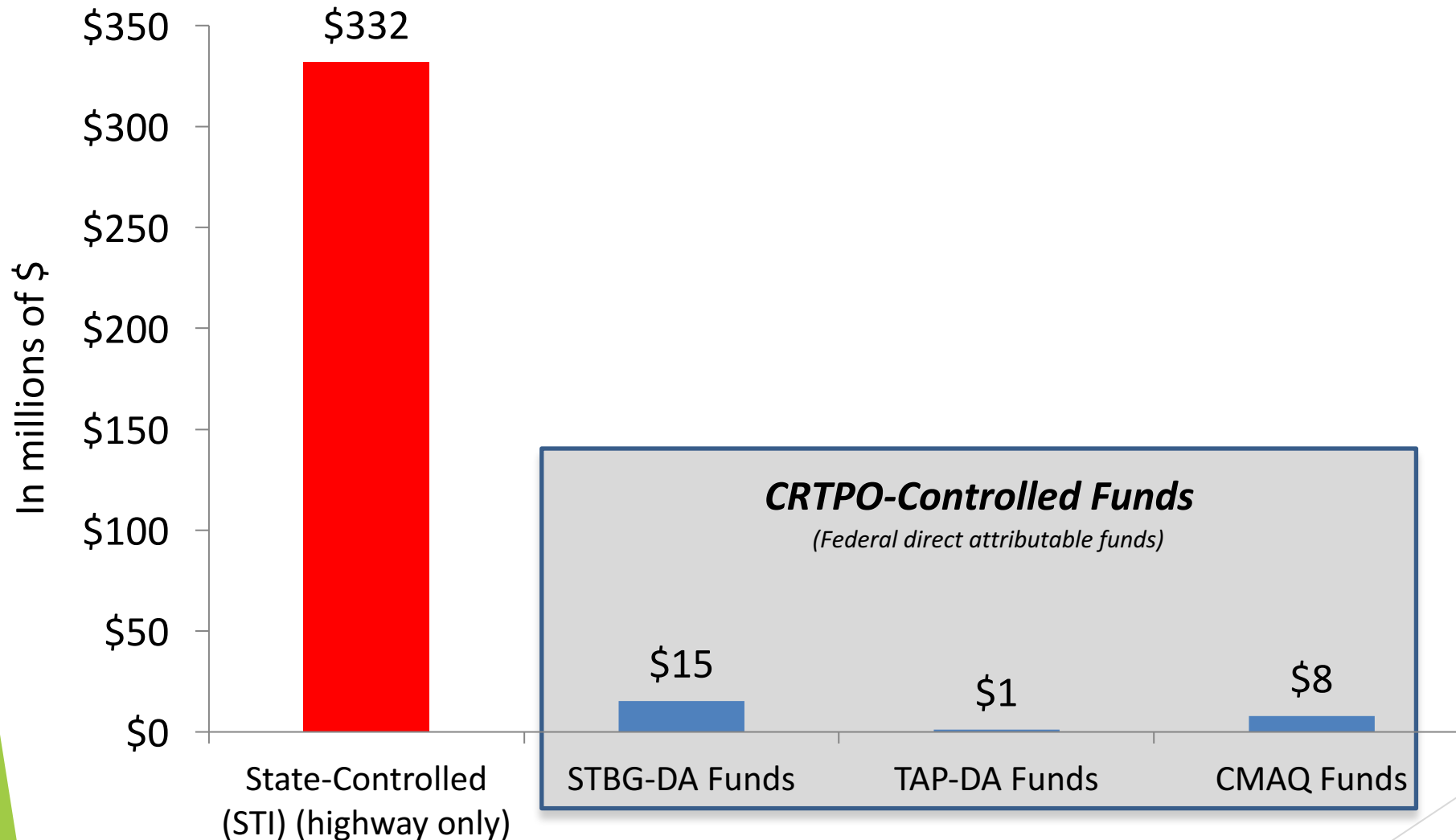
- Allocate STBG-DA, TAP-DA, CMAQ, and Bonus Allocation funds to member jurisdictions
- Ensure that all funding has been obligated to avoid rescissions
- Monitor approx. 100 active discretionary projects
 - Request updates at least quarterly



► Prior CRTPO process:

- Separate, ad-hoc project calls for the STBG, TAP, CMAQ, and Bonus Allocation funds allocated directly to CRTPO
- Time-consuming to repeat the same deliberation process each time
- Process was confusing to outsiders

Current Annual Funding Levels



**Note: Based upon averages within the 2018-2027 Transportation Improvement Program. Funding amounts subject to change.*

Project Oversight Committee

- ▶ Subcommittee of CRTPO's TCC(TCC), formed in 2015.
 - ▶ Reforms to State funding legislation (Strategic Transportation Investments law)
 - ▶ Bonus Allocation from I-77 High Occupancy Toll (HOT) project (\$144 Million)
- ▶ Tasks identified in governing document:
 - ▶ Project selection methodologies
 - ▶ Consensus-based recommendations
 - ▶ Review/recommend requests for additional funding for active projects
- Late 2017: Discussed the need for documented policies
- Early 2018: Surveyed POC members regarding policy content

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graph TD; TCC[Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)] --> POC[Project Oversight Committee (POC)];
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Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

Project Oversight Committee (POC)

Project Oversight Committee

- ▶ Research policy guides from other NC MPOs, including meeting with staff from Raleigh area MPO (CAMPO).
- ▶ Initial policy development products:
 - ▶ Chapter outline
 - ▶ Annual unified funding schedule
 - ▶ Document adoption schedule
- Planned to make decisions with the full committee, topic by topic.....





Rethinking Our Approach

Fundamental areas to address before we could move forward:

- 1. How to reach agreement (and stay in agreement) with 15+ people at the table.*
- 2. How to facilitate discussion and still have our point of view included in the discussion.*
- 3. How to press pause on business-as-usual and make policy development the number-one priority of a busy committee.*



Forming a Work Group & Hiring a Facilitator

- ▶ Recognized the need to have discussions in a smaller group or groups.
- ▶ CRTPO staff drafted a list of six members to serve on the Discretionary Policy Development Work Group.
- ▶ Presented a proposal to the POC to:
 - *form the Work Group to make policy recommendations, draft the document & annual schedule;*
 - *hire a professional facilitator to guide the policy-development process in an impartial manner; and*
 - *delay awarding FY-19 funds until after document complete and adopted.*

Technical Coordinating
Committee (TCC)

Project Oversight
Committee (POC)

Policy Development
Work Group

Building Consensus

- ▶ Four Work Group meetings, August through December
- ▶ *What's In Your Boat?: The 5 Policy Values*

1. *Equitable process*
2. *Consistently applied*
3. *Cost-effective*
4. *Easily understood by potential applicants*
5. *Transparent*

- ▶ Next: Stakeholder interviews
- Testing the 5 Values
- Developing the Policy's Guiding Principles



Building Consensus

► *Guiding Principles of the Policy*

- Guide the development of the discretionary-projects policy
- Supported by the 5 Values and consistent with stakeholder input

- 1. Projects must be federal funds-eligible.*
- 2. Must be an annual schedule for proposing, scoring and funding projects.*
- 3. Project scoring must be consistent with the requirements of the funding sources.*
- 4. Must include a process for addressing project funding shortfalls.*
- 5. The process will be iterative (i.e. will evolve based on experience).*
- 6. The policy must be transparent and easily understood by key stakeholders.*

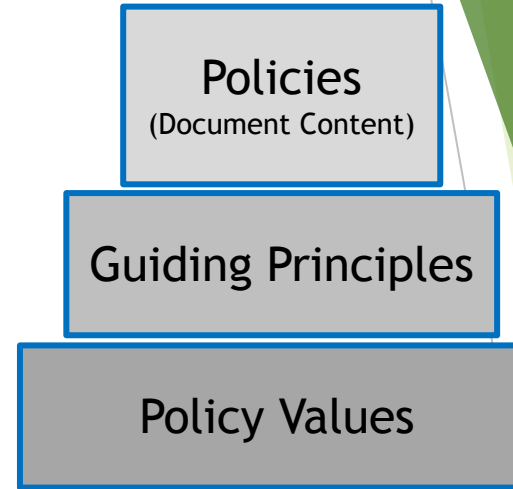
► Next: Focus Group

Guiding Principles

Policy Values

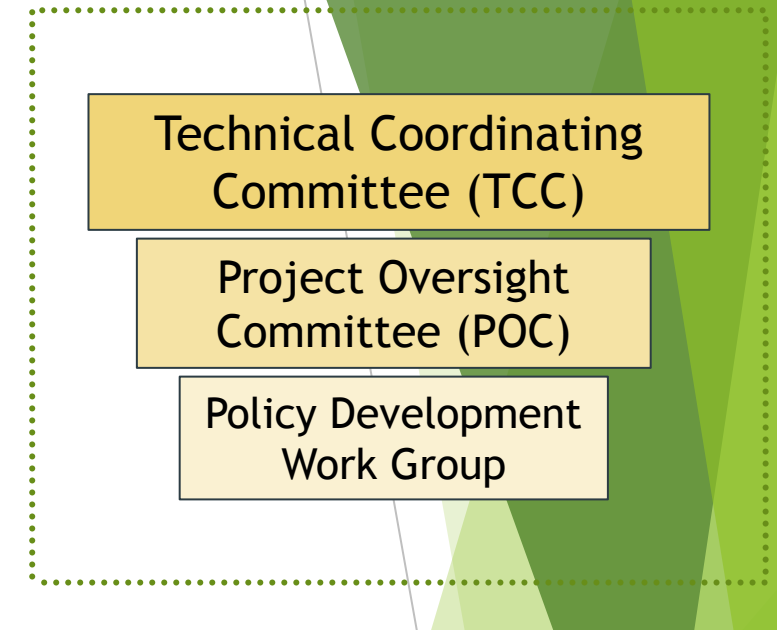
Building Consensus

- ▶ *Focus Group Session: Are we on the right track?*
- Engaging elected officials in the process
- Reporting on the work completed to date
- Testing the Guiding Principles and the 5 Values
- Seeking feedback on proposed policy changes
- Sharing results of research into specific policy topics



Building Consensus

- ▶ *Putting it in writing*
 - Work Group consensus on key policy recommendations
 - Delegating main writing tasks and timeline for edits
 - Work group approved draft December 4th
- ▶ *Constant communication*
 - Reporting to POC at each meeting
 - Reporting to TCC and Board at key points in process
- ▶ *Beginning the approval process*
 - Group presentation to POC December 13th
 - TCC-Board Workshop December 18th



Building Consensus - Approval Process

► *TCC-Board Workshop*

- Work Group and facilitator conducted presentation together
- Excellent discussion & overall agreement on policy recommendations
- Some concerns raised which resulted in minor policy changes
- Bridged the gap with approval process in January-February 2019



Approval & Implementation

► *Board action*

- CRTPO's Discretionary Projects Policy Document and annual schedule adopted February 2019

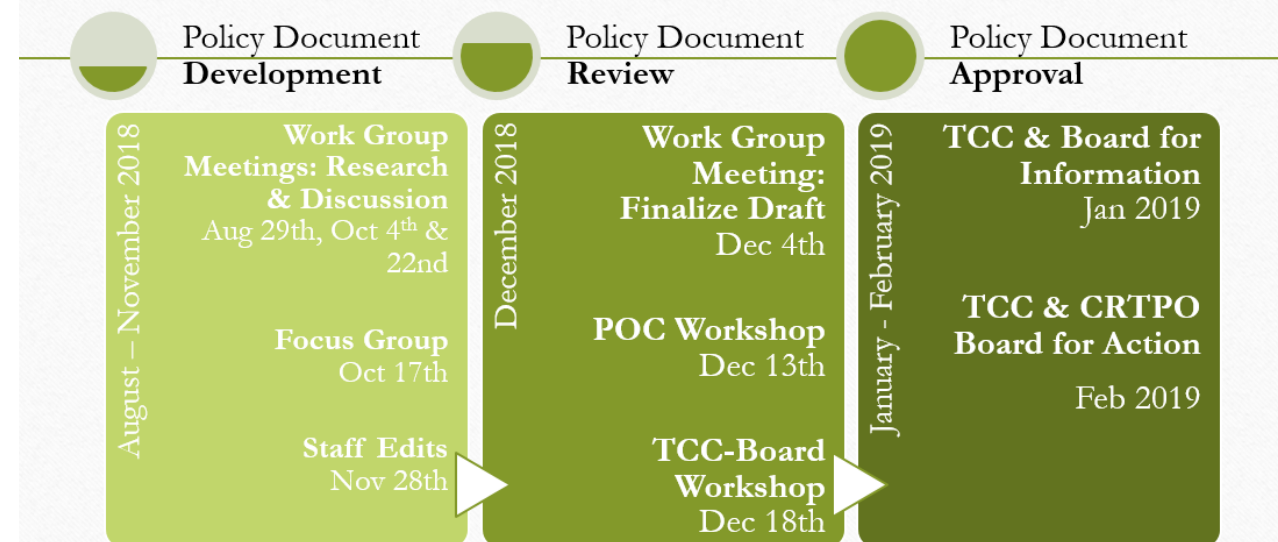
► *Implementation by staff & Project Oversight Committee*

- Shortfall funding round March - April
- Funding decisions under review May 2019

► *Next Steps*

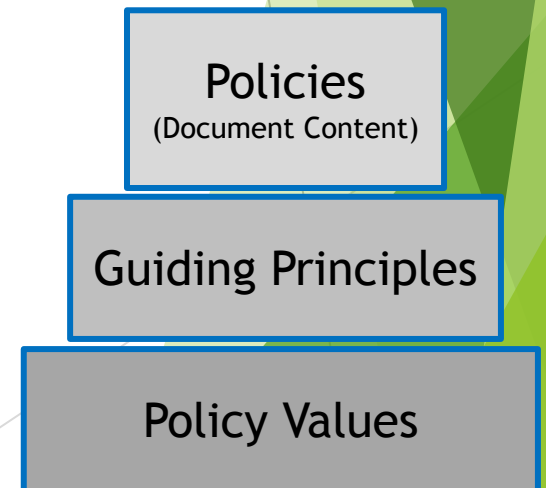
- Applicant training session webinar
- Call for projects
- Documenting potential policy revisions

Development Timeline



Analysis & Closing Thoughts

- ▶ *Build relationships and utilize expertise*
 - Account for all of the skill sets and points of view relevant to the project
 - Delegate tasks carefully and appropriately, and acknowledge your limitations
- ▶ *Recognize team members' contributions*
 - Verbal and/or monetary* appreciation for *all* contributors' time and energy
 - *Includes snacks, lunch, dinner
- ▶ *Communicate*
 - Iron out problems, conflicts, and misunderstandings as early as possible, by design
 - Achieve consensus and build agreement in stages
 - Be flexible, but make decisions in the spirit of the agreed-upon core principles



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