



52 Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study – Project Management Plan

Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments

April 2024

BCDCOG
BERKELEY-CHARLESTON-DORCHESTER
COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS
PLANNING, PARTNERSHIP & PROSPERITY



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INTRODUCTION

The Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Government (BCDCOG) is the government agency responsible for transportation planning in Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties along the coast of South Carolina. In response to regional growth and increasing mobility needs, BCDCOG completed the Regional Transit Framework Plan (RTFP) in 2018 to identify a multi-modal transit vision for the region, priority transit corridors, and potential solutions to growing traffic volumes. The results of RTFP identified five priority corridors within the three counties and recommended Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) systems to improve regional mobility and address growing traffic volumes.

BRT is a public transit mode that includes sections of dedicated bus lanes, off-board fare collection, level boarding, and signal priority at intersections to ensure faster and more reliable service. BRT systems are designed to provide efficient, high-capacity transit service options.

Following the suggestions from the RTFP, BCDCOG pursued the Lowcountry Rapid Transit (LCRT) project. This project proposed a 21.3-mile Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) line that is currently progressing through engineering and design. BCDCOG serves as the Sponsor and Program Manager for the LCRT, which will run along US 78/US 52 from the Exchange Park Fairgrounds in Ladson to Downtown Charleston with a mix of dedicated, semi-exclusive guideway and mixed traffic BRT lanes. The route of LCRT was identified as one of the five priority corridors in the RTFP and is the first BRT system planned for the region.

In addition to LCRT's proposed route, RTFP identified the US 52 corridor from Moncks Corner to Charleston as another priority corridor. The US 52 Corridor Study established a vision for the US 52 corridor between Moncks Corner and North Charleston. The study examined land uses along the corridor, planned for anticipated growth, and identified critical elements for transit planning along the corridor while examining multimodal solutions for the future. The US 52 BRT Feasibility Study will evaluate the corridor from North Charleston to Moncks Corner to analyze the feasibility of BRT implementation and related bus service improvements (**Figure 1**). Data collected from the US 52 Corridor Study will be utilized for the US 52 BRT Feasibility Study.

This Project Management Plan (PMP) defines the details of project management during the US 52 BRT Feasibility project. It provides the framework for managing the schedule, project committees, public and stakeholder engagement, and key deliverables. This document outlines the management philosophy, goals and objectives, and organizational structure; defines the responsibilities and roles of project participants; identifies the interactions among project staff and consultants; and specifies the general procedures and management tools that will be implemented to ensure effective project management and successful project completion. The PMP will be updated and revised as needed throughout the project.

BASIS FOR THE PROJECT

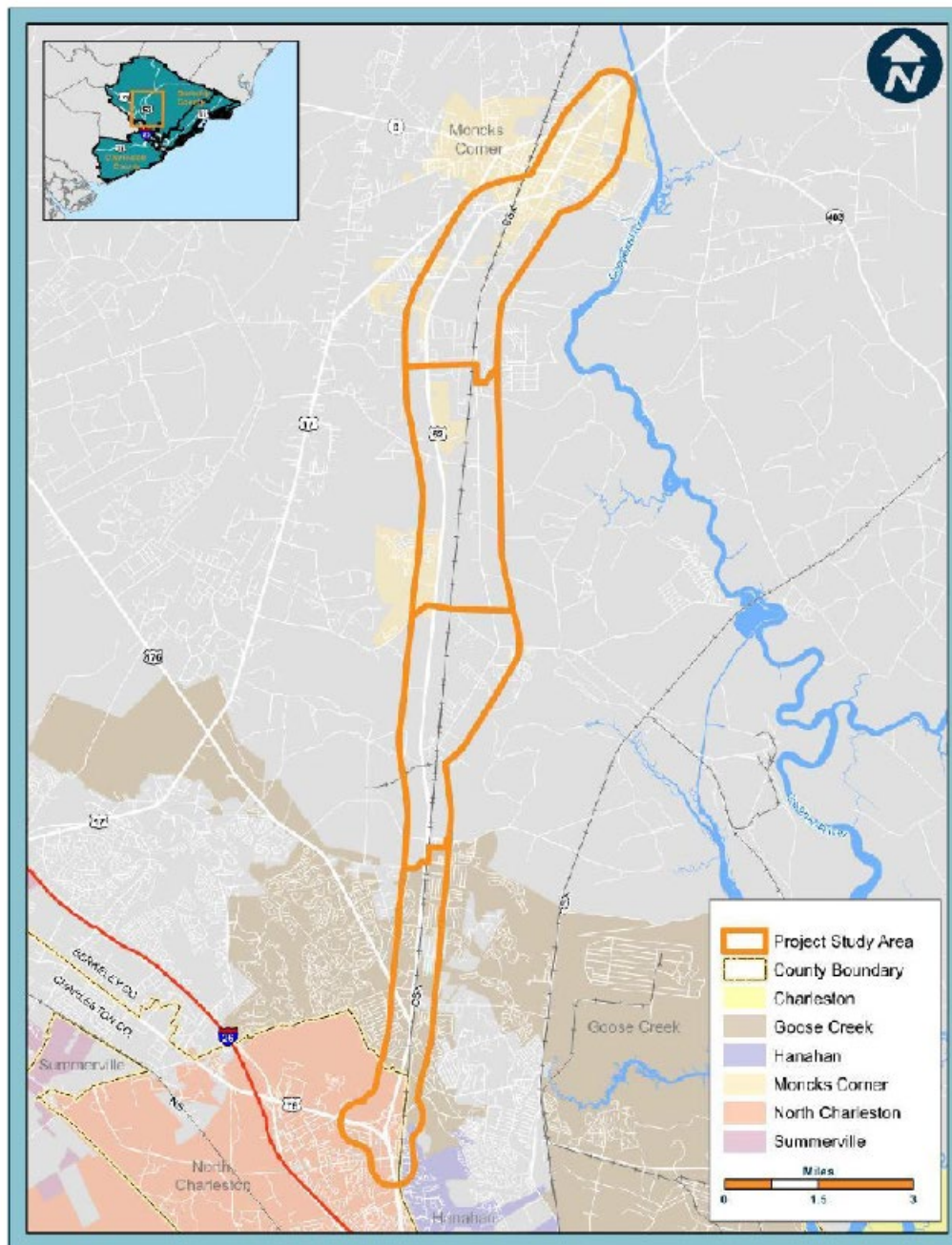
The US 52 corridor is an important connection between North Charleston, Goose Creek, and Moncks Corner. Its proximity to Charleston and North Charleston makes it attractive for residential and employment development, increasing the demand for upgraded infrastructure and additional residences. Because of the anticipated growth, the US 52 corridor was identified as one of the top five priority corridors for BRT in the RTFP. While US 52 was identified as a high-priority corridor that has experienced consistent growth that is anticipated to continue, TriCounty Link (TCL) remains the only public transit service in the area. TCL operates nine regular fixed routes and four commuter routes in rural and suburban areas of Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties.

PROJECT PURPOSE, NEED, AND GOALS

The purpose of the US 52 BRT Feasibility Study is to evaluate the corridor from North Charleston in Charleston County to Moncks Corner in Berkeley County. The objective of the study is to investigate, analyze, and determine the feasibility of implementing BRT and associated bus service enhancements. The goal is to develop a phased plan to transition TCL fixed route transit services to a BRT line that will connect to the LCRT BRT project currently in design.

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Figure 1. US 52 BRT Feasibility Study Area

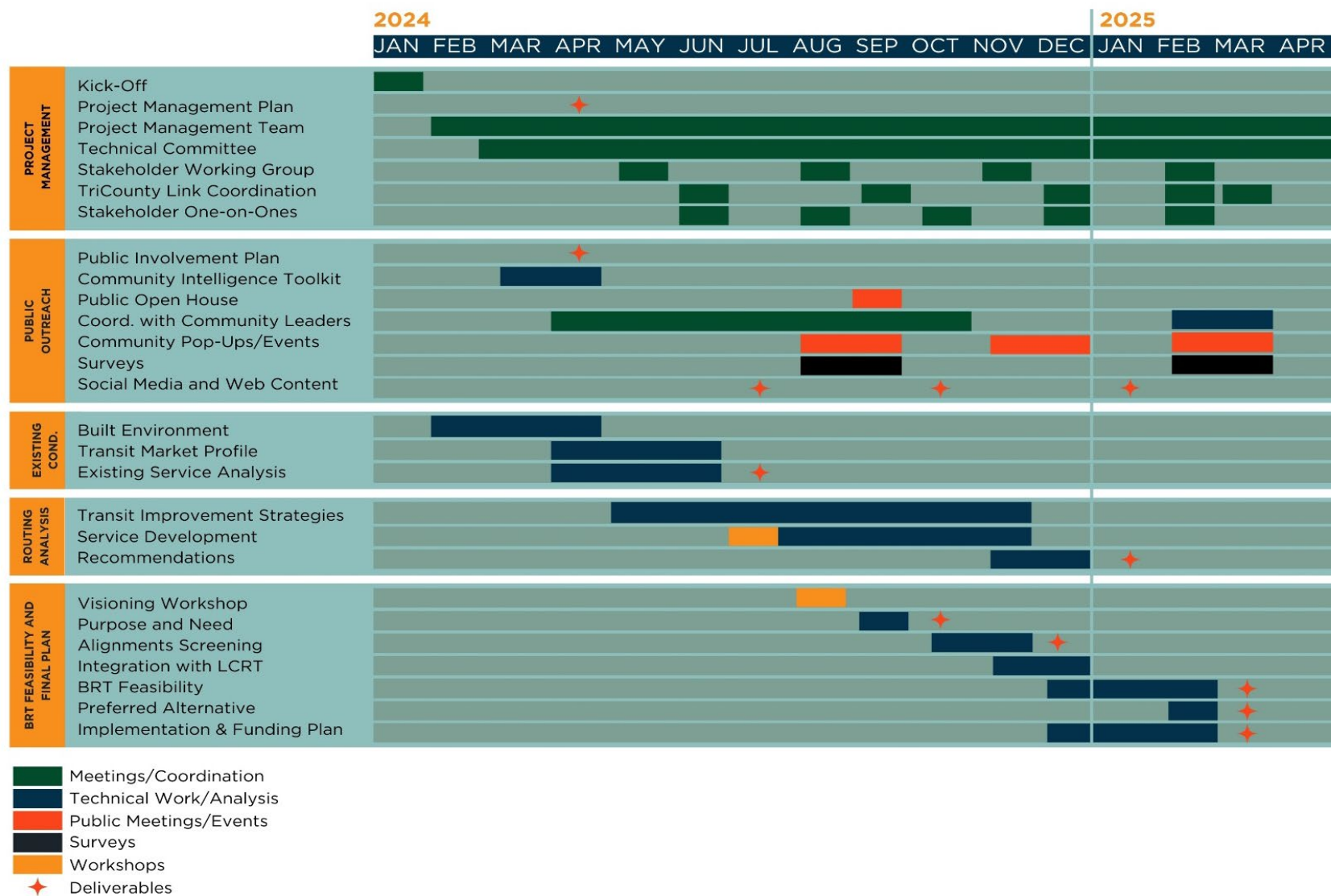


PROJECT TIMELINE

The study will be conducted within a fifteen-month timeline. A milestone schedule aligning critical milestones with the core tasks is presented in **Figure 2**.

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Figure 2. US 52 BRT Feasibility Study Timeline



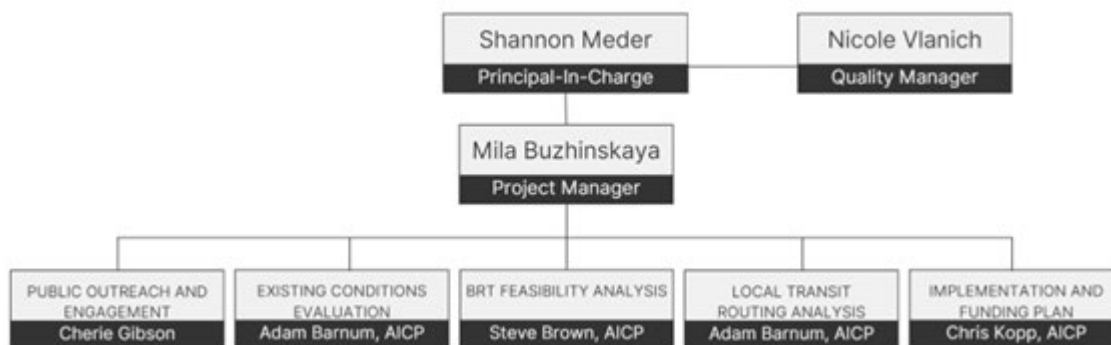
PROJECT MANAGEMENT

PROJECT ORGANIZATION AND KEY PERSONNEL

The study will be completed successfully through the concerted efforts of responsible parties who will work together as an attentive team, providing multiple levels of oversight to ensure a successful outcome. The following sections describe the structure, integration, and interfaces of the study organization.

BCDCOG owns the study and manages it through Sharon Hollis, AICP. The HNTB consultant team supports the BCDCOG project manager. **Figure 3** illustrates key consultant staff and task leads involved in the study.

Figure 3. HNTB Key Staff Chart



Shannon Meder – Shannon serves as the Study Principal-in-Charge, providing contract support and ensuring the continuity of project resources.

Nicole Vlanich – Nicole serves as the Study Quality Manager.

Mila Buzhinskaya – serves as the Study Project Manager and day-to-day point of contact for BCDCOG staff for the project.

Cherie Gibson – Cherie is the Public Outreach and Engagement Task Lead that spearheads initiatives to foster community involvement and effectively disseminate information to diverse stakeholders.

Adam Barnum – Existing Conditions Evaluation Task Lead oversees the assessment and analysis of current conditions using a variety of collected data sources. Adam is also leading the

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Local Transit Routing analysis building on the previously completed technical work and re-envisioning transit and micro-transit mobility solutions to provide feeder services to the corridor.

Steve Brown – BRT Feasibility Analysis Task Lead, Steve, is working on assessing the corridor and providing an evaluation of various alignments, station locations, and system features.

Chris Kopp – The Implementation and Funding Plan Task Lead will develop a funding plan to support study recommendations. The plan will provide recommendations for funding the capital investment, primarily associated with the BRT infrastructure, operating expenses to support the future BRT line and redesigned feeder mobility solutions.

PROJECT COMMITTEES

Building on the previous project management and engagement structures established for the US 52 Corridor Study, a multi-tiered committee structure is planned for the US 52 BRT study. The purpose of these committees is to guide the development of the study, which includes establishing decision-making processes, evaluating potential changes to the Project's design, schedule, or cost as well as the incorporation of stakeholder input at key milestones.

Project Management Team (PMT)

The PMT for this study consists of the BCDCOG Project Manager (PM), HNTB PM, and relevant task leads invited on an as-needed basis. The role of the PMT is to oversee all aspects of the study, both contractual and technical. This team will oversee the management, development, and completion of the study. The PMT will meet bi-weekly to ensure consistent and timely communication.

Technical Committee (TC)

The TC is comprised of technical staff from BCDCOG and local agencies. This committee's focus will be on reviewing technical information and providing feedback on member's respective areas of technical expertise. The TC will review and comment on the public engagement content. This committee will also assist the PMT with identifying relevant project stakeholders who will be included in the Stakeholder Working Group membership. The TC will hold meetings monthly.

Stakeholder Working Group (SWG)

The SWG is composed of various community representatives interested in the study and the overall mobility and infrastructure development in the region. Members of the SWG will be determined through coordination with BCDCOG and HNTB staff and include appropriate representation of elected officials, policymakers, agency staff, advocacy organizations, and community spokespersons. The SWG will receive updates on the status of the project, represent

the interests of their organization and communities, and provide feedback on specific needs, desires, and concerns of their representative group. The group will meet quarterly.

PUBLIC AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

In addition to working with a Stakeholder Working Group, HNTB will develop and implement a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) consistent with BCDCOG's current public involvement process. The PIP will clearly define methods and opportunities for all citizens, including ethnic, minority, and low-income groups, people with disabilities, elderly citizens, and other traditionally underrepresented groups, to participate in the transportation planning process.

HNTB will use a Community Intelligence Toolkit (CIT) to support public outreach efforts. The CIT is a digital framework that provides access to standardized demographic data from various public and commercial sources. CIT will provide BCDCOG with an approach for data-driven equity decisions.

HNTB will provide various engagement opportunities, including:

- Public Open House
- Coordination with business and community leaders/organizations
- Community pop-up and tabling events
- Online and paper surveys
- Social media and website content

BCDCOG staff will actively participate in the implementation of the PIP, including assistance with the scheduling of appropriate locations and dates, the advertisement and marketing of the workshops and any other involvement activities, and the recruitment of desired participants.

MEETINGS

The PMT will meet bi-weekly via a virtual platform. HNTB will generate meeting notes and submit them to BCDCOG for approval. PMT meetings will be attended by the HNTB Project Manager, relevant task leads, and BCDCOG participants.

The TC will meet virtually monthly to review technical information and provide feedback in the respective areas of technical expertise. The TC will also review and comment on the public engagement content.

The SWG will meet quarterly. These meetings will be both virtual and in-person. The SWG will receive updates on the status of the project and will have the opportunity to provide feedback from the perspective of the community.

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Additionally, the study will include coordination with TCL and one-on-one meetings with individual stakeholders.

KEY DELIVERABLES

Key Deliverables for each task are identified in **Figure 2**.

PROJECT PARTICIPANTS

PROJECT SPONSOR AND KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG)

BCDCOG is the study owner and sponsor. BCDCOG is a regional planning organization that serves Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties. BCDCOG focuses on coordinating and addressing regional issues, including transportation planning, economic development, and environmental concerns, to promote collaborative and effective solutions for the community.

South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT)

The US 52 corridor is located within State Highway ROW (ROW). As such, SCDOT is a key stakeholder in the study.

TriCounty Link

The TCL system consists of nine standard fixed routes and four commuter routes providing transit service to the rural residents of Berkeley, Charleston, and Dorchester counties. BCDCOG provides management and oversight of TCL operations.

Charleston Area Regional Transportation Authority (CARTA)

CARTA currently provides local bus service within Charleston County. BCDCOG provides management and oversight of CARTA operations.

City of North Charleston

The US 52 BRT Feasibility Study Boundary originates in the City of North Charleston near the future connection to the LCRT. The US 52 corridor is one of the longest corridors identified in the RTFP. It is approximately 32 miles long and connects several municipalities. The station at Melnick Drive in North Charleston is the southern limit of the proposed corridor infrastructure investment.

City of Goose Creek

As the corridor advances north, it connects to the City of Goose Creek.

Town of Moncks Corner

The Town of Moncks Corner is the northern limit of the study area.

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Berkeley County

Berkeley County administers a sales tax program designated to fund expenses associated with highways, roads, streets, bridges, and other transportation-focused infrastructure projects within the county. Berkeley County voters have endorsed the tax in 2008, 2014, and 2022.

Charleston County

Charleston County currently has two sales tax programs that fund transit projects. The county is planning an additional sales tax referendum to continue the funding once the first program expires.

GOVERNMENTAL AND OVERSIGHT AGENCIES

Federal Agencies – Federal Transit Administration (FTA)

The FTA is a federal agency granted oversight authority within the United States Department of Transportation. The FTA administers the allocation and use of federal funds for mass transit projects. This study is partially funded by the FTA discretionary grant.

State Agencies – South Carolina Department of Transportation

The study corridor is located primarily within State Highway ROW (ROW). The Project Management Team will maintain close collaboration with SCDOT as the feasibility phase and future planning work advances along the corridor.

Local Agencies

The study area is located within the counties of Berkeley and Charleston, as well as the cities of North Charleston, Goose Creek, and the Town of Moncks Corner. BCDCOG will maintain coordination with each jurisdiction's departments of Planning, Transportation, Public Works, or other appropriate departments during the design and construction phases of the project.

Equal Employment Opportunity Compliance

The BCDCOG does not discriminate against any person in employment and/or in access to contracts. The BCDCOG's policy ensures that all applicants are considered for employment or procurement opportunities regardless of race, religion, creed, color, sex, age, national origin, disability, or marital status. BCDCOG and project partners affirm the project's commitment to fair employment considerations for all applicants considered for employment or procurement activities.

PROJECT CONTROLS

A successful project can be defined as having achieved the project objectives within time, within cost, and at the desired performance/technology level (quality) while utilizing the available resources effectively and efficiently. The schedule arranges study activities in a logical sequence and connects them with relationships so that project impacts can be detected and assessed. HNTB has an established process of reviewing the progress of the project on a regular basis to provide early detection of scope, schedule, and budget concerns and track important activities and milestones.

COMMUNICATION

Communication protocols play a crucial role in facilitating effective collaboration between HNTB, the consultant team, and BCDCOG, the study sponsor. The communication protocols are designed to establish a structured framework for the exchange of information, progress updates, and key decisions related to the study. These protocols encompass regular meetings, progress reports, and a clear channel for immediate communication to ensure timely and transparent communication. By adhering to these protocols, both HNTB and BCDCOG can streamline their efforts, share valuable insights, and address any challenges that may arise during the study, ultimately contributing to the successful development and implementation of the US 52 BRT project.

The HNTB Project Manager assigned to the study is the primary point of contact for the consulting team. Similarly, the BCDCOG Project Manager is the primary point of contact for the BCDCOG team. These study team members will coordinate and communicate regularly and engage additional team members as needed.

MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORTING

Monthly project reports for the study will provide an overview of the ongoing efforts and progress within this transportation initiative. These reports include a summary of key milestones achieved, challenges encountered, and activities conducted during the month. The reports serve as a crucial tool for transparency and communication. Through these regular updates, the study team will maintain accountability, foster collaboration, and ensure that the study stays aligned with its goals and objectives.

DOCUMENT RECORDS CONTROLS

The study document control procedures ensure that all electronic and non-electronic project files are captured and cataloged for storage and easy retrieval. Currently, all documents and records related to the Project are included in ProjectWise and SharePoint (a secure internal study team coordination and retention sites).

PROJECT BUDGET CONTROL

Monthly reviews of project budgets are pivotal for maintaining financial accountability and ensuring projects adhere to planned expenditures. These reviews involve comparing actual expenses incurred with the budgeted allocations. Monthly reviews offer an opportunity to identify emerging risks and issues, enabling timely mitigation strategies to prevent cost overruns. This includes evaluating change requests and scope changes, ensuring they align with project objectives while assessing their financial implications.

SCHEDULE CONTROL PROCEDURES

Throughout the execution of study work, regular updates will be made to the schedule to reflect the status of tasks and milestones accurately. It is imperative for the schedule to precisely depict the ongoing plan and to fulfill the remaining authorized scope outlined in the baseline. Schedule management and control procedures commence once a baseline schedule has been established. Any proposed changes to the baseline schedule must be documented in a change notice and managed in accordance with program procedures.

WORK ORDER ADMINISTRATION

HNTB developed this PMP to establish a project management cadence that ensures regular coordination, timely feedback, and schedule adherence.

The work order is administered through the study management structure discussed in the PMP. It includes a nucleus PMT consisting of HNTB project management, BCDCOG project management staff, and supporting members. SCDOT staff and Berkeley County staff will be included in coordination with the overall project, as needed.

A Public Involvement and Stakeholder Coordination Plan will be developed to outline existing technical and citizen committees that will be utilized as advisory review committees of draft products produced at key milestones of the study.

WORK ORDER MODIFICATION

A work order modification refers to a change or alteration made to an existing work order. This adjustment can encompass various elements within the work order, such as scope, specifications, timeline, budget, or any other relevant details. Work order modifications are typically initiated to accommodate unforeseen circumstances, address changes in project requirements, or respond to evolving conditions that impact the original work order parameters.

The modification process involves documenting the proposed changes, obtaining approval from the relevant parties, and updating the work order accordingly. This ensures that all parties are informed of the adjustments and that the work proceeds in alignment with the modified specifications.

Upon approval of a work order modification, the current target scope/schedule will be revised and communicated to all affected parties. The original baseline and all subsequent revised baselines or target scopes/schedules will be preserved for project records.

QUALITY MANAGEMENT PLAN

The HNTB Quality Management System (QMS) is a compilation of documents. Quality planning begins with setting up the quality plan and identification of all deliverables associated the study, and then determining and documenting the appropriate quality check and review activities to be applied to each deliverable based upon complexity and risk. Required checks and reviews are documented within a Deliverable Quality Matrix. Electronic workflows may be established to manage the required sequence and completion of necessary check and review activities while maintaining accountability and detailed quality records.

RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk management involves the identification, assessment, and mitigation of potential threats that could impact the study's successful execution. The initial step is identifying risks across various phases, considering internal and external factors. Upon identifying these factors, a thorough assessment evaluates the likelihood and impact of each risk, prioritizing them for effective management. Mitigation strategies are then developed to address high-priority risks. Open communication with stakeholders is crucial throughout the process, and continuous monitoring ensures adaptability to changing circumstances. As the study progresses, potential risks will be discussed utilizing the established PMT structure.

DISADVANTAGED BUSINESS ENTERPRISES (DBE) GOAL

HNTB has a long-standing history of successfully integrating disadvantaged business enterprise (DBE) subconsultants into project teams. HNTB developed a plan to utilize DBE partners in significant roles where they provide the highest and best value to the project. DBE firms will be engaged in their areas of expertise and included in project activities where they can participate and contribute to the overall project success and expand their individual capabilities to be a resource for BCDCOG in the future. DBE goal for this study is 5%.

BCDCOG, as a recipient of federal funds, has established DBE Programs in accordance with Title 49 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Part 26: “Participation by Disadvantaged Business Enterprises in Department of Transportation Financial Assistance Programs.” These regulatory provisions apply to all the agency’s federally assisted contracts.

It is the policy of the BCDCOG to ensure that DBEs, as defined in Title 49 CFR, part 26, have an equitable opportunity to compete for and participate in U.S. DOT-assisted contracts and subcontracts. BCDCOG is firmly committed to its DBE Program and the following objectives, which are designed to:

- Ensure nondiscrimination in the award and administration of US DOT-assisted contracts.
- Create a level playing field where DBEs can compete fairly for US DOT-assisted contracts.
- Ensure that the DBE Program is narrowly tailored in accordance with applicable law.
- Ensure that only firms fully meeting 49 CFR Part 26 eligibility standards can participate as DBEs.
- Remove barriers to the participation of DBEs in US DOT-assisted contracts.
- Assist the development of firms that can compete successfully in the marketplace outside the DBE Program and
- Facilitate competition in US DOT-assisted public works projects by small business concerns, both DBEs and non-DBE small businesses.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this comprehensive Project Management Plan (PMP) outlined above provides a roadmap for the successful execution of the US 52 BRT Feasibility Study. With the Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments (BCDCOG) leading the initiative and collaborating with key stakeholders, including governmental agencies, transit authorities, and local communities, the study aims to address the pressing need for enhanced transit infrastructure in the region. Through rigorous project controls, effective communication strategies, and a commitment to quality management and risk mitigation, the study aims to deliver implementable phased recommendations aligned with its goals and objectives.

The monthly progress reporting and budget control mechanisms embedded within the PMP ensure transparency and accountability. Furthermore, the emphasis on stakeholder engagement and inclusion of Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) underscores the study's commitment to equity, diversity, and community participation. As the study progresses, continuous refinement and adaptation, guided by the established project management structure and risk management protocols, will enable the study to navigate complexities and deliver actionable recommendations for the future of transit in the US 52 corridor. Through these concerted efforts, the US 52 BRT Feasibility Study endeavors lay the groundwork for a sustainable, equitable, and efficient transportation system that serves the evolving needs of the region's residents and businesses.