

SUMMARY MINUTES

MACORTS Technical Coordinating Committee
WebEx Virtual Meeting Platform
Wednesday, January 27, 2021
10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Brad Griffin - ACC Planning Director
Sherry McDuffie - ACC Planning Department
Cherie Varnum - ACC Planning Department
Rani Katreeb- ACC Transportation & Public Works
Jalen Ford - GDOT Planning Office
Jody Woodall - Oconee County Public Works Department
Butch McDuffie - ACC Transit Department
Mike Matthews – Athens Airport
Todd Berven - UGA Transit
Conolus Scott, Jr - Madison County Citizen Rep
Sue Anne Decker - GDOT

Others Present: Virginia Hamilton - UGA Transit
Kimberly Grayson - GDOT

I. CALL TO ORDER & ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS AND GUESTS

Mr. Griffin called the meeting to order at 10:03 am.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

There was none.

III. APPROVAL OF OCTOBER 28, 2020 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to approve of the minutes from the October 28, 2020 TCC meeting. Mr. Woodall seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

IV. REVIEW OF FINAL FY 2022 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated the UPWP outlines the activities the MPO staff will focus on in FY 2022. She noted previously the committee recommended approval of the draft in October. The approved Draft was sent to GDOT & FHWA for their review, and those comments were addressed and sent out to members in the mail-out prior to the meeting.

She also explained the priorities listed in the Final Draft are Safety, Performance Management Implementation, MTP & TIP, Congestion

Management, Freight, & 2020 Census. She showed the revised budget and noted there were no changes made to the 5303 Transit Planning Grant.

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to recommend adoption of the Final FY 2022 UPWP. Mr. Berven seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

V. REVIEW OF DRAFT MACORTS PARTICIPATION PLAN & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated the list of changes made to this document were sent to members prior to the meeting. She noted most of the changes were clarifying existing procedures and codifying the practice of virtual committee and public meetings. She explained that virtual meeting could be used as conditions dictate or at the pleasure of the Policy Committee.

She also explained an analysis of the MPO virtual operations during the pandemic. She stated that attendance at virtual committee meetings has increased. She also noted there is lower attendance at the virtual public meetings; however, the overall approach to connect with the public virtually via the MACORTS website seems to reach more people overall. She explained that website traffic has increased compared to previous years.

Ms. McDuffie stated the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan and Participation Plan will be taken to the public together for 45 days of public review and comment. Staff is prepared to have virtual or in-person meetings depending on conditions. She noted that the TCC will review the Final Draft and all public comment received at the April 28th meeting.

Mr. Woodall made a motion to recommend approval of the Participation Plan to go to the public for review and comment. Mr. Matthews seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VI. REVIEW OF DRAFT MACORTS & ATHENS TRANSIT DEPARTMENT LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY PLAN & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated this document is required to demonstrate MACORTS and ACC Transit compliance of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and Executive Order 13166 in regards to persons that do not speak English as their primary language or who have limited ability to read, write, speak, or understand English. This document is updated every 3 years. She gave a short presentation on the framework of the document and explained the importance of the 4-factor analysis. These four factors include:

- **Factor 1** - Establish eligible service for population & proportion of LEP customers.
- **Factor 2** - Frequency that LEP persons encounter services via surveys that were conducted with the ACC Planning, MPO, & Transit Staffs.
- **Factor 3** - Nature & importance of services in the transit and MPO arena.
- **Factor 4** - Resources available and costs for providing interpretation/translation services.

She stated the LEP Plan and Participation Plan will be taken to the public together for 45 days of public review and comment. Staff is prepared to have virtual or in-person meetings depending on conditions. She noted this committee will see the Final Draft and all public comment received at the April 28th public meeting.

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to recommend approval of the Limited English Proficiency Plan to go to the public for review and comment. Mr. Woodall seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VII. REVIEW OF AMENDMENT TO FY 2018 – 2021 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR SR 10 / US 78 BRIDGE PROJECT OVER NORTH OCONEE RIVER & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie explained the process of TIP's being approved in Georgia. She stated that once MPO's in the state adopt their TIP document, that TIP is rolled into the STIP (Statewide Transportation Improvement Program) and is approved through GDOT. The STIP receives final approval when it is signed by the Governor. The MACORTS FY 21-24 TIP was adopted by the MPO on October 14, 2020, but it is anticipated that the STIP will be signed in the April/May 2021 timeframe. Therefore, the 21-24 TIP is invalid until that time. This will require the MPO to continue amending the 18-21 TIP in the interim.

This amendment increases the ROW estimate and moves it into FY 21 as it is shown in the 21-24 TIP document, but MACORTS must officially amend the 18-21 TIP to show this information. She stated because of the amount of difference in funding (\$250,000 to \$3,437,400), this requires an amendment and a 15-day public comment period.

Mr. Katreeb made a motion to recommend approval of the amendment to the FY 18-21 TIP to go to the public for review and comment. Mr. Matthews seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VIII. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION TO 2045 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN (MTP) & FY 2018 – 2021 TIP & FY 2021 – 2024 TIP TO INCORPORATE THE 2021 SAFETY PERFORMANCE TARGETS & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated that every year the MPO must adopt safety targets for the measures of number of fatalities, rate of fatalities, number of serious injuries, rate of serious injuries, and number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries. In previous years the MPO has agreed to support the safety targets developed by GDOT. The MPO recommends supporting the state targets and incorporate them into the MTP, the valid FY 18-21 TIP & the FY 21-24 TIP. This would be an administrative modification; therefore, no additional public comment is required beyond that of the committee meetings.

Mr. Scott made a motion to recommend adoption of the administrative modification to incorporate the 2021 Safety targets into the 2045 MTP, FY 2018 -2021 TIP, and FY 2021 - 2024 TIP. Mr. McDuffie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

IX. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION TO 2045 MTP & FY 2018 – 2021 TIP & FY 2021 – 2024 TIP TO INCORPORATE THE 2021 TRANSIT ASSET MANAGEMENT PLAN PERFORMANCE TARGETS & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated that each year GDOT updates the performance measures and targets in the Group Transit Asset Management Plan for the rural and small urban transit systems in Georgia. She noted the ACC Transit Department provided MACORTS staff with their endorsement of the measures and targets in the Group TAM Plan. She also explained the MPO must incorporate these targets into our MTP, the valid FY 18-21 TIP & the FY 21-24 TIP. As an administrative modification, no additional public comment is required beyond that of the committee meetings.

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to recommend adoption of the administrative modification to incorporate the 2021 Transit Asset Management Plan targets into the 2045 MTP, 2018-2021 TIP, and 2021-2024 TIP. Mr. Bervan seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

X. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION TO 2045 MTP & FY 2018 – 2021 TIP & FY 2021 – 2024 TIP TO INCORPORATE THE 2021 PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION AGENCY SAFETY PLAN PERFORMANCE TARGETS & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated that beginning this year, the MPO will annually incorporate the targets included in the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan for the ACC Transit Department into the MTP and TIP. As an administrative modification, no public comment beyond that at the committee meetings is required.

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to recommend adoption of the administrative modification to incorporate the 2021 PTASP targets into the 2045 MTP, FY 2018-2021 TIP, and FY 2021-2024 TIP. Mr. Berven seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

XI. REVIEW OF ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATION TO FY 2018 – 2021 TIP & FY 2021 – 2024 TIP TO UPDATE THE BUDGET FOR THE SR 10 LP AT US 29 BRIDGE PROJECT & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated staff received a request from GDOT to revise the budget for the construction phase of SR 10LP at US 29 bridge project. The construction phase would increase from \$9.3 million to \$10,008,024.46. She

noted this will be administrative modification included in the FY18-21 TIP & FY 21-24 TIP.

Mr. Katreeb made a motion to recommend adoption of the administrative modification to update the construction phase funding for the SR10Lp at US29 bridge project in the FY 2018-2021 & FY 2021-2024 TIPs. Mr. McDuffie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

XII. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

XIII. UPDATES / OTHER BUSINESS

Athens Transit

Mr. McDuffie stated the transit system continues to operate at reduced service and will operate fare free through June 30th. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the ridership of their transit system. The system currently operates 16 buses and has had continued decrease in ridership (40% decrease from last year at this time and 98 % decrease UGA ridership). The transit system will have to explore other funding sources in order to operate fare free.

UGA Transit

Mr. Berven stated their transit system has continued to decrease in ridership. Ridership has been about 7,200 students/day versus pre-Covid 42,000 students/day. There are 33 buses in operation with limited seating. They have 20 electric buses in operation and will have 13 more electric buses soon, this will allow them to retire diesel buses.

Oconee Public Works

Mr. Woodall stated the roundabouts SR 53 for Snows Mill Road / Rocky Branch Road and Rays Church / Malcolm Bridge Road are currently in the design phase. The Mars Hill Phase II widening project was let on January 22, 2021, and construction should begin soon. Staff is working with GDOT for a quick response project on SR 10 & Epps Bridge Parkway to convert the configuration to a free flowing right lane. This would also lead to a proposed extension of the existing left turn lane traveling from Epps Bridge to the Oconee Connector for a local project to help ease some of the traffic in this area. There is preliminary concept work for Hog Mountain Road Improvement project to include 2 ft. shoulder widening with center left turn lane in some areas and overlay from Twelve Oaks Drive to US 441. There would need to be a quote for the design phase of the center left turn lane where this project ties to the Mars Hill Phase two project.

Madison County

Mr. Scott stated they have a new Board of Commission Chairman and two new members on the Madison County Commission board. They are in the process of evaluating the MACORTS projects for Madison County.

Athens-County Transportation & Public Works Department

Mr. Katreeb stated the Tallassee Road Bridge Replacement project is currently in the final design phase, with utility coordination and relocation underway. Staff has completed multiple sidewalk projects with traffic signal upgrades and ramps: Baxter Street/Milledge Avenue, Southview Drive/Milledge Avenue and Southview Drive/ Agriculture Drive. The West Broad Gap Sidewalk project near Camelia Drive has been completed. There was also a double 8 x 8 culvert replaced on Carriage Lane. Several projects are in the preliminary design phase for Cherokee Road, Jefferson River Road, and Riverbend Road, and Barber Street. There was a public comment survey completed for the Riverbend Road project, and there will be a future public comment survey for the Barber Street project multi-use path.

Athens Airport

Mr. Matthews stated operations have been slow due to the Covid-19 pandemic (operations is defined when plane takes off and lands counted by the control tower). Previously, operations were about 4,500-5,000 monthly but since March 2020 the average has reduced to about 1,600 monthly. However, operations are slowly beginning to increase up to 2,800 monthly due to Gwinnett County Airport being closed for 2 months for major construction to their runway and increased activity involving UGA basketball games. Projects to improve the runway will begin as FAA funding (Federal Aviation Administration) becomes available.

GDOT

Ms. Decker stated the following projects are coming up soon:

Oconee County

- * 0013723 – Oconee & Greene County Passing Lane Project on SR 15
GDOT decided to remove the Oconee section from this project and place these areas into a new passing lane project due to public concerns about the passing lane locations and impact to driveways
- * SR316 from the Barrow County line to the Oconee Connector resurfacing project - to begin in April
- * Bishop Bypass project forwarded to project team initiation this year to identify risks to schedule
- * Mars Hill Phase II widening project was let this past Friday
- * Off system project scheduled for June letting

Madison County

- * 013996- SR 8 at South Fork of Broad River scheduled for May letting
- * 013997- SR 281 at Broad River scheduled for November letting
- * Off-system project for safety improvements went to preconstruction meeting this past November so construction may happen soon
- * SR 72 resurfacing project scheduled to begin in August

Athens-Clarke County

- * SR 10 / SR10 Loop scheduled for April letting
- * Bridge Rehabilitation for SR 10 Loop at Oconee River moved to July

- * Bridge Rehabilitations for SR 8, SR10 and SR 10 Loop are scheduled for March. These group bridge rehabilitations will remain scheduled for March if maintenance funds are available. If more stimulus funding passes, GDOT is proposing \$320 million dollars to go into maintenance funds.
- * SR 10 / North Oconee River was moved out to June 2022.
- * Jennings Mill project is scheduled for this February.
- * SR 10 Loop / Middle Oconee River scheduled for October but funding has been pushed to 2025 so the project will go on the shelf until funding is available.

GDOT Planning

Mr. Ford introduced Kimberly Grayson as the MPO's new GDOT planner. Ms. Decker also stated the GDOT Planning Office went through a major reorganization, and there are several changes to the department structure.

XIV. ADJOURN

Mr. Griffin adjourned the meeting at 11:05 am and reminded the members the next TCC meeting is scheduled for February 24, 2021.