

Summary Minutes of
MACORTS Technical Coordinating Committee
A-CC Planning Department Auditorium
Wednesday, October 28, 2015
10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Brad Griffin - ACC Planning Department
Sherry McDuffie - ACC Planning Department
Butch McDuffie - Athens Transit System
Blaine Williams - ACC Manager's Office
Darius Malone - GDOT Planning Office
David Ballard - Athens Transit
Kim Coley - GDOT District 1
Steve Decker - ACC Traffic Engineering
BR White - Oconee County Planning Department
Emil Beshara - Oconee County Public Works
David Clark - ACC Transportation & Public Works
Ron Hamlin - UGA Transit

Others Present: Kyle Mote - GDOT Planning Office
Matt Gottschalk - Public
Steve Cote - RS&H Consulting
Ann Marie Day - FHWA
Rachel Hatcher - RS &H Consulting
Brandon Kirby - GDOT District 1
Shannon Giles - GDOT District 1

I. CALL TO ORDER

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

II. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

None

III. APPROVAL OF AUGUST 26, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to approve the August 26, 2015 meeting minutes with a small correction to add Mr. Hank Joiner's attendance to that meeting. Mr. White seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

IV. OVERVIEW OF ATHENS TRANSIT SYSTEM'S TRANSIT FEASIBILITY STUDY

Mr. McDuffie introduced Rachel Hatcher, a consultant of RS&H. Ms. Hatcher made a presentation about progress on the Athens Transit System's Transit Options Feasibility Study. There was some brief follow-up discussion.

V. REVIEW OF PROPOSED MACORTS REQUEST TO ACCELERATE THE SCHEDULE FOR THE SR 10 LOOP AT LEXINGTON ROAD INTERCHANGE PROJECT AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated Athens Clarke County representatives have been working with GDOT to prepare for the right-of-way plans for this project. The TIP currently reflects FY 2019 right-of-way phase and FY 2021 construction phase. She stated ACC would like to move this project's right-of-way phase from FY 2019 to FY 2017.

Ms. McDuffie stated that staff would need to draft a letter requesting that GDOT consider the shift in schedule. If approved by GDOT, the TIP would be amended to reflect the shifting of funds at a later date. Mr. Clark stated the design process is proposed to be finished by spring 2016. He expressed the county's hope that this project could be accelerated since it's been on the books for about 20 years.

Mr. Clark made a motion to recommend MACORTS staff draft a letter to GDOT Planning requesting the shifting of ROW funds from FY 2019 to FY 2017 for the SR 10 Loop at Lexington Road Interchange Project. Mr. Clark requested a copy of the letter be sent to Athens Clarke County's Transportation Board members. Mr. Beshara seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Beshara asked if a priority letter/statement from the local government was given to GDOT for the project. Mr. Mote stated there are a lot factors that go into planning and programming projects which include: fiscally constraint within a year to meet FHWA requirements, fiscally constraint statewide per congressional district over a 5 year period, amount of local funding provided, politics, and federal funding uncertainty. Mr. Mote also stated the request should include very specific detailed reasons why the project should be shifted.

Mr. Beshara stated Oconee County has a similar request that involves an interchange at SR 316 and the Oconee Connector. He stated that there is interest in bringing this project into the LRTP. Mr. Griffin stated the discussion regarding the project Mr. Beshara is inquiring about for Oconee will be placed on the January TCC agenda to allow time to review necessary information about the project.

VI. REVIEW OF DRAFT AMENDMENTS TO 2040 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN & FY 2015-2018 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE – US 441 SOUTH WIDENING & 4 BRIDGES ALONG SR 10 LOOP

Ms. McDuffie reviewed the information for the proposed amendments and explained there were originally 4 bridges included in the mail out, however there will only be a total 3 bridge locations. She stated GDOT would like for

MACORTS to add the following bridges along SR 10 Loop: North Oconee River, Middle Oconee River and SR8/US 29. She also stated the bridges are structurally deficient.

Ms. McDuffie stated GDOT has informed MACORTS that the US 441 South Widening project in Oconee County will be funded entirely with HB 170 (state) funding – PE \$1 million in FY 19, ROW \$15,653,658 in FY 2022, and Construction \$59,263,472 in FY 2022. Since HB 170 is state money, the project doesn't have to be in the LRTP. Staff recommended the US 441S project be located in the unfunded section of the LRTP. Moving that project out of the LRTP would allow approximately \$11.8 million to be used for the proposed bridge amendments. The bridges over North Oconee River and SR 8/US 29 would be completely covered in cost; however, the bridge over the Middle Oconee River would only include PE and ROW phases in the LRTP.

Ms. McDuffie stated a 15-day public comment period would be required to amend both the LRTP and TIP documents concurrently. There was some discussion.

Mr. Clark made a motion to recommend approval of beginning the public comment period for the proposed amendments to LRTP & TIP to show the US 441 S project in the Unfunded Section of the LRTP due to its being funded with HB170 (state funds) and the moving of 3 bridge projects on SR 10 Loop into the LRTP and TIP for all phases except Construction of SR 10 Loop at Middle Oconee River project. Mr. Mote seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VII. REVIEW OF PROPOSED MACORTS REQUEST TO REALLOCATE FUNDS FROM MITCHELL BRIDGE ROAD WIDENING PROJECT TO SR 10 LOOP AT ATLANTA HIGHWAY INTERCHANGE PROJECT AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated ACC has been working with GDOT for the last couple of years to refine the design of the SR 10 Loop at Atlanta Highway Interchange project. She stated since ACC completed the Mitchell Bridge Road Widening project completely without federal funds, they would like to request that GDOT move the funds that were allocated to the Mitchell Bridge Road project into the Atlanta Highway Interchange project in order to allow the project to include the intersection realignment of Atlanta Highway / Mitchell Bridge Rd / Timothy Road.

Ms. McDuffie stated that staff would need to draft a letter requesting that GDOT shift these funds. If approved by GDOT, the TIP would need to be amended to show the shifting of funds at a later date.

Mr. Clark made a motion to recommend MACORTS staff draft a letter to GDOT Planning requesting the shifting of funds from the Mitchell Bridge Road Widening project to the SR 10 Loop at Atlanta Highway Interchange project and that the project be modified to include the realignment of the Atlanta Highway/Mitchell Bridge Road/Timothy Road intersection. Mr.

McDuffie seconded the motion. There was some discussion. The vote was unanimous.

VIII. REVIEW OF PROPOSED MACORTS REQUEST TO REALLOCATE PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING FUNDS FROM JIMMIE DANIEL / JIMMY DANIELL ROAD WIDENING PROJECT TO OTHER PROJECT(S) AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated Oconee and ACC representatives met with GDOT about the Jimmie Daniel project. She stated GDOT was supportive of moving forward with the project. Oconee and ACC reps were supportive of the project but not the proposed timeline. Due to financial requirements and issues, both counties representatives preferred to stay with the timeframe that was approved in the 2040 LRTP (2025 – 2029). Ms. McDuffie stated since PE funds can only remain inactive for 1 year and ROW funds for 10 years, the PE funding programmed for Jimmie Daniel Rd project needs to be reassigned. Ms. McDuffie stated MACORTS staff was told that MACORTS (PC) could request for those funds to be assigned to a different project(s) in FY 2016. There was brief discussion.

Ms. McDuffie stated staff would need to draft a letter requesting that GDOT move the PE funding from the Jimmie Daniel project to the project(s) of MACORTS' choosing. If approved by GDOT, the TIP would need to be amended to show the shifting of funds at a later date.

There was some discussion between Mr. Beshara and Mr. Clark.

Mr. Clark made a motion to table this item until January. Mr. Beshara seconded this motion. The vote was unanimous.

IX. REVIEW OF AMENDED FY 2016 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM TO ADD CARRYOVER FUNDING AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated this will be the last year that unused funds from previous years can be rolled into the Planning Grant. She stated the unused funds from FY 2015 need to be rolled into the UPWP before GDOT can issue a supplemental contract. She also explained that the substance of the work elements had not changed, and the additional funding (\$452,357.31) had been distributed across all work elements. This document is not required to go out for public involvement; therefore, only one vote from each committee will be necessary.

Mr. White stated he was asked by Chairman Davis to take a look at doing a study from Epps Bridge at the Athens-Clarke/Oconee county line down SR 316 at the Barrow county line to review access roads and interchange improvements. Mr. White asked how to begin the process of requesting for this type of study. Ms. McDuffie explained MACORTS would need a description of what is requested in the special study and cost estimate. There

was some discussion. She also stated the UPWP would be amended to include the study and the funds would have to be expended by June 30, 2016.

Mr. Clark made a motion to recommend approval of the amended FY 2016 UPWP. Mr. White seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

X. REVIEW OF DRAFT FY 2017 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated the Draft UPWP for FY 2017 has been revised extensively in response to the comments of our federal partners. Financially nothing had changed since the last Draft sent out except that the 5303 Transit Planning Grant was revised to reflect an increase in funding from \$85,000 to \$88,205. Ms. McDuffie stated the draft is due to GDOT in December.

There was some discussion about rollover funding. Mr. Clark requested that the purchase of traffic counters be placed in the unfunded work elements instead of removed entirely.

Mr. Clark made a motion to recommend approval of the Draft FY 2017 UPWP, including the unfunded work elements and the possible associated local financial commitment if the unfunded work elements are awarded funding. Mr. McDuffie seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

XI. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

XII. NEW BUSINESS

Athens Transit System

Mr. McDuffie stated the Transit Options Feasibility Study is going well. He also stated Sunday service is averaging about 1,000 rides per day. Transit will receive 2 new 40 ft. buses next week. Mr. Griffin commended Mr. McDuffie and RS&H for reaching different areas of the community and great attendance at the original Stakeholder meeting.

Athens-Clarke County Transportation & Public Works Department

Mr. Clark stated the roundabout at Tallassee Road and Whitehead Road is open and working very well. The Mitchell Bridge Road widening project has been delayed slightly and should be finished during December. He also stated they are in the bid process for the bike lane project on College Station Road and hope to start construction in January 2016.

Oconee County Public Works

Mr. Beshara stated Phase I of Mars Hill Rd is still proceeding well and the vast majority of utilities have been relocated. The first major traffic shift is still planned for the first week of December. Oconee County is doing a joint

project with GDOT to create a dual left turn lane at Hog Mountain Road and US 441.

Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Day stated that FHWA will host a free 1-day Performance Based Planning workshop for MPOs and GDOT on January 20th or 21st. She stated there will be a Performance Based MPO Self Assessment Tool sent to MPOs. FHWA will provide a template to MPO's to revise the reimbursement request forms soon. There was some brief discussion.

Georgia Department of Transportation-District One

Mr. Kirby introduced Shannon Giles as the Athens Area Office Engineer. He explained that HB170 funding is anticipated to be available in Spring 2016. The capital program will see a surge of funding; however, maintenance will be the top priority for use of HB170 funds.

XIII. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 11:14am. Mr. Griffin stated the next TCC meeting is scheduled for January 27, 2016.