

SUMMARY MINUTES

MACORTS Technical Coordinating Committee
WebEx Virtual Meeting Platform
Wednesday, April 22, 2020
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 and Public Works
Jalen Ford - GDOT Planning Office
Jody Woodall - Oconee County Public Works Department
Butch McDuffie - ACC Transit Department
Don Walter - UGA Campus Transit
Colonus Scott - Madison County Citizen Representative
Guy Herring - Oconee County Planning Department
Marilyn Hall - Public Utilities
Kim Coley – GDOT, District 1
Sue Anne Decker - GDOT
Ryan Walker – GDOT, Intermodal Programs

Others Present: Ann Marie Day - FHWA
Tom Caiafa – GDOT Planning
Virginia Hamilton - UGA Transit
Jessie Blankenship - GDOT

Victor Pope - ACC Transit Department

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

Mr. Griffin called the meeting to order 10:02 am. Ms. McDuffie took roll of members and guests. He thanked everyone for attending the virtual meeting during the Covid-19 event.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

There was none.

III. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 22, 2020 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to approve minutes of January 22, 2020 TCC meeting. Mr. Walter seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

IV. REVIEW OF AMENDMENT TO FY 18 – 21 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM: REVISIONS TO BRIDGE PROJECTS (BELMONT RD, CLOTFELTER RD, SR 10LP AT US 29) & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Mr. Griffin reviewed the following amendments to the FY 18-21 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP):

- The Belmont Road Bridge at Shoal Creek Right-of-Way phase has moved into FY 21 with a funding decrease from \$250,000 to \$125,000.
- The Clotfelter Road Bridge at Barber Creek Right-of-Way phase moved into FY 21 with a funding decrease from \$250,000 to \$136,000.
- The SR 10 Loop at US 29 Bridge Replacement project construction phase funding has increased from \$6,165,720 to \$9,264,577 in FY 21.

Mr. Griffin presented the proposed timeline for the required public comment. He stated that if it is possible on May 14, in-person meetings will be held. Otherwise, staff will hold a virtual public meeting on Monday, June 1st from 4 – 5pm. The amendments and public comment received would come back to TCC on June 24th and to Policy Committee for final approval on July 8th.

Mr. Woodall made a motion to recommend approval to take the amendment for the bridge projects in the 18-21 TIP out to the public for review and comment. Mr. Scott seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

V. REVIEW OF AMENDMENT TO 2045 METROPOLITAN TRANSPORTATION PLAN & FY 18 – 21 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM : ADD UGA AS ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT, ADD 5339 GRANT FOR UGA, & ADJUST 5339 FUNDING FOR ACC TRANSIT & RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Mr. Griffin stated this amendment is a result of UGA Campus Transit System recently receiving a Section 5339 Discretionary Capital Grant from FTA. He explained GDOT has determined UGA Campus Transit is an eligible recipient for federal transportation funds. Since their eligibility is new, the MPO must amend the 2045 MTP to include UGA Campus Transit's profile and anticipated federal funding requests as it does for ACC Transit Department.

He stated that one amendment to the FY18-21 TIP is required to show the new grant award to UGA Campus Transit in the amount of \$8,778,824 total (\$7,462,000 Federal; \$1,316,824 Local). The other amendment to the TIP involves updating the 5339 grant amount for the ACC Transit Department from \$2,825,000 to \$1,500,000 to match the award amount.

Mr. Griffin presented the proposed timeline for the required public comment. He noted that if it is possible on May 14, in-person meetings will be held. Otherwise, staff will hold a virtual public meeting on Monday, June 1st from 5:30-6:30pm. The amendments and public

comment received would come back to this committee on June 24th then to Policy Committee for final approval on July 8th.

Mr. Walker stated that GDOT will be administering the grant for the UGA Campus Transit System. He stated that GDOT appreciates all of the work the MPO has completed to process the inclusion of this grant for the UGA Campus Transit System.

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to recommend approval to take the amendments to the 2045 MTP and FY 18-21 TIP to the public for review and comment. Mr. Katreeb seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

VII. UPDATES / OTHER BUSINESS

DISCUSSION REGARDING GDOT REQUEST FOR REVIEW OF MACORTS PARTICIPATION PLAN AND MTP/TIP AMENDMENT PROCESS

Mr. Griffin stated GDOT requested the MPO review the public involvement process associated with amendments to see if there was any way to speed up the process. He also explained the GDOT/FHWA guidelines for amendments versus administrative modifications.

Ms. Day asked about the current MPO's timeline for amendments and modifications. Ms. McDuffie clarified the process takes about 2 1/2 months to ensure that the TCC & Policy Committees review information prior to public comment review. Ms. Day stated it is good practice to separate the timeframe for TCC and Policy Committee Meetings. She also noted the federal process requires the Policy Committee to approve all information prior to being sent out for public review. She clarified that the federal process does not allow to bypass TCC/Policy Committee meetings but the MPO could possibly have special called meetings in place of the regular scheduled meetings to help shorten the process. Ms. McDuffie stated that usually the MPO has an extremely difficult time getting the TCC/Policy boards to attend special called meetings. However, the MPO has monthly meetings to accommodate board members and provide opportunities to move things forward.

Mr. Caiafa stated GDOT requested the MPO to review their Participation Plan for the MTP/TCC amendment/modifications recently due to a certain project cost increase. He noted the required MPO amendment timeline would take a little longer than the time available to meet the project's let date for the project; however, the let date has since been pushed back to October. There was some discussion about flexibility and the required time for administrative modification and amendments for MTP and TIP documents. Ms. Day stated there is a federal process that must be followed so internal conversation at GDOT should be made to keep consistency with the process.

UPDATES:

ATHENS CLARKE COUNTY TRANSPORTATION & PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Katreeb stated the sidewalk project on West Broad Street will be located near Camellia Drive area (close to the Arby's on this street to the intersection near the Carwash) and will include signal notifications and ADA improvements. The annual PMP program should award a contract next month to start construction for various pavement activities around the county toward the end of the year. The Tallassee Bridge Replacement has delayed the Notice to Proceed until August. This project will build a new bridge parallel to the existing bridge, so the county will not impede or detour traffic; however, traffic will be shifted over in order to remove the old bridge. The future pedestrian improvement projects for Jefferson River Road and Cherokee Road concepts have not been approved yet but will go to the Mayor & Commission with a scheduled public comment for May or June. The Corridor plan for North Chase Street / Oneta Street to Newton Bridge Road will be bid out soon for Preliminary Engineering services.

OCONEE PUBLIC WORKS

Mr. Woodall stated there is a current RFQ out for the design phase of two roundabouts on SR 53 for Snows Mill Road/Rocky Branch Road and Rays Church/Malcolm Bridge Road. The projects are planned to be federal safety projects and staff has been working in coordination with the GDOT District 1 office (Gainesville) to get LAP Certification to meet requirements for these projects. Staff is preparing for the annual resurfacing program. The Malcolm Bridge Road at Malcolm Bridge Elementary & Middle School proposed bus entrance roundabout has finished clearing phase and is currently getting utility relocation. Staff is also reviewing the possibility of additional corridor improvements in this area. One possibility for the school driveways would include adding medians to allow a U-turn configuration; however, they are reviewing the cost and capability of the existing contractor to complete this option. Bishop Parkway has received construction bids that came in over budget so the project will be shelved until additional funding is available.

ATHENS TRANSIT

Mr. McDuffie stated that the transit system is currently operating on 8 buses per hour due to the restrictions for COVID-19 requirements; however, they are experiencing 3,000 passenger trips per day. There is a need for an increase in transit service to be able to follow the required social distancing requirements. The bus front entrance door is blocked off and passengers can't come closer than six feet of the driver and that is marked with yellow caution tape. Staff has requested for 4 additional buses to help with the increase need for more service. The summer and fall service frequency will depend on how the COVID 19 requirements change. The two hybrid electric busses scheduled to be delivered in May will be pushed out 6 - 8 weeks. The transit system has a pending application with GDOT to apply for additional operating and capital assistance through the CARES Act program. This program is providing additional funding for transit systems affected by COVID 19. The transit system is currently operating fare free until July.

UGA TRANSIT

Mr. Walter stated their transit system is not in operation at this time.

FHWA

Ms. Day complimented the MPO on keeping business moving forward. She also stated she would continue to share work from home tips to the MPO and any additional technology resources available. Mr. Griffin thanked her for providing this information.

GDOT

Mr. Caiafa stated they are currently working on the STIP and sending out the Draft FY 21 - 24 TIP funding levels to MPOs. He also noted that Paul Tanner retired from GDOT and his position is still vacant.

ACC PUBLIC UTILITIES

Ms. Hall stated there is planned construction on sewer lanes for South Newton Street (currently closed), Baxter Street, Hull Street, and South Lumpkin Street (all areas around the UGA campus). They will host public meetings in June for the Draft Service Delivery Strategy Plan; however, they are still not sure if they will be virtual or not.

GDOT TRANSIT

Mr. Walker thanked FHWA and GDOT Planning for the earlier discussion about the federal amendment process. He also thanked MACORTS for all the hard work completed for the UGA 5339 transit amendment. He shared that he or Mr. McDuffie would be the contact people to discuss projects listed in the Draft FY 21 - 24 TIP information that start with a T. The ACC transit project numbers and funding will be a little different with the FY20 - 21 CARES Act. The same project numbers may not be used for some of the transit projects; however, the funding will be awarded. As far as the out years for FY 22, 23, 24 the project numbers will be used. The Annual Call for Projects may have projects with slightly different finance changes. He also noted his appreciation for the MPO having monthly meetings to conduct business.

VIII. ADJOURN

Mr. Griffin adjourned the meeting at 10:52 am. He thanked everyone for their attendance and stated the next TCC meeting is scheduled for May 27, possibly virtually.