

## SUMMARY MINUTES

MACORTS Policy Committee  
WebEx Virtual Meeting Platform  
Wednesday, May 12, 2021  
10:00 a.m.

**Members Present:** John Daniell, Oconee County Chairman  
Todd Higdon, Madison County Chairman  
Sara Beresford, Athens-Clarke County Citizen  
Dave Henson, Oconee County Citizen  
Virginia Hamilton, UGA Alternate  
Radney Simpson, GDOT Planning Office

**Others Present:** Sherry McDuffie, MACORTS  
Cherie Varnum, MACORTS  
Pat Hale, Athens Transit Department  
Victor Pope, ACC Transit Department  
Tom Caiafa, GDOT Planning Office  
Kimberly Grayson, GDOT Planning Office  
Ashley Finch, GDOT Intermodal Programs  
Sue Anne Decker, GDOT District 1

### **I. CALL TO ORDER / ROLL CALL OF MEMBERS AND GUESTS**

Mr. Daniell called the meeting to order at 10:01 am. Ms. McDuffie took note of members and public in attendance.

### **II. APPROVAL OF APRIL 14, 2021 MEETING MINUTES**

Ms. Beresford made a motion to approve the April 14, 2021 PC meeting minutes. Mr. Higdon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

### **III. REVIEW OF PUBLIC COMMENT RECEIVED AT TCC MEETINGS/ PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS**

There was none.

### **IV. REVIEW AND DETERMINATION OF FINAL DRAFT LIMITED ENGLISH PROFICIENCY (LEP) PLAN**

Ms. McDuffie stated the committee previously reviewed this document in draft form. She noted this document is required to demonstrate MACORTS and ACC Transit Department compliance under 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. She stated staff had to ensure accessibility to the programs and services that are provided. The public

comment period for the LEP plan was held February 22 – April 7, and the summary of this public comment was presented along with a summary of the website traffic recorded during that period. No changes were made to the document since the committee last reviewed it in draft form. TCC recommended adoption of the LEP Plan as presented.

Ms. Beresford made a motion to adopt the Final Draft Limited English Proficiency Plan as presented. Mr. Higdon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**V. REVIEW AND DETERMINATION OF FINAL DRAFT PARTICIPATION PLAN**

Ms. McDuffie stated the committee previously reviewed this document in draft form. She explained that the document is required to document how MACORTS’ staff interacts with the public in the course of the transportation planning process. The Participation Plan public comment period was held February 22 – April 7, and the summary of this public comment was presented along with a summary of the website traffic recorded during that period. She stated there was a minor change to correct information for the ACC Planning Department website that was pointed out during public involvement period. Mr. Henson requested that GDOT’s Project Information website page be added to the MACORTS website and to the Participation Plan for future reference. TCC recommended adoption of the Participation Plan as presented.

Mr. Henson made a motion to adopt the Final Draft Participation Plan with the addition of the GDOT Project Information webpage notation. Ms. Beresford seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VI. REVIEW AND DETERMINATION OF FINAL DRAFT AMENDMENT TO FY 2021 – 2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR LUMP SUM PROJECTS, SR 10LP AT ATLANTA HIGHWAY, SR 10LP AT MIDDLE OCONEE RIVER, & CLOTFELTER ROAD BRIDGE OVER BARBER CREEK**

Ms. McDuffie stated the committee previously reviewed these amendments in draft form. The following amendments revise the budget and/or schedule of several projects in the 21-24 TIP. She reviewed the project sheets showing:

SR 10Lp at Atlanta Highway, PI#122890, CST Phase: The phase remains in FY 2023, and the cost estimate increased by \$3,281,189 to \$41,515,039. UTL Phase: The phase remains in FY 2023, and the cost estimate increased by \$2,233,406 to \$7,105,412.

Freight Operations Lump Sum – This new Lump Sum category was added with FY 22 funding of \$66,000, FY 23 funding of \$133,000, and FY 24 funding of \$133,000.

Rural Development Operations Lump Sum – This new Lump Sum category was added with FY 22 funding of \$66,000, FY 23 funding of \$133,000, and FY 24 funding of \$133,000.

SR 10 Lp over Middle Oconee River – The CST phase of this project was moved from FY 2024 to FY 2025. Neither the funding amount nor funding codes changed.

Clotfelter Road Bridge over Barber Creek – The ROW phase remains in FY 21. The CST phase of this project was moved from FY 2024 to FY 2025. Neither the funding amount nor funding codes changed.

Ms. McDuffie stated that the public comment period for these amendments was held March 22 – April 5, and the summary of the public comment received was presented along with a summary of the website traffic recorded during that period. She stated that no changes were made to the amendment since the committee saw the draft version. TCC recommended adoption of the amendments to the FY 21-24 TIP as presented.

Mr. Henson made a motion to adopt the amendments to the 21-24 TIP. Ms. Beresford seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VII. REVIEW AND DETERMINATION OF FINAL DRAFT AMENDMENT TO FY 2021 – 2024 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FOR REVISIONS TO FY 22 SECTION 5307 CAPITAL FUNDING FOR ATHENS-CLARKE COUNTY TRANSIT DEPARTMENT**

Ms. McDuffie stated this amendment would revise the Section 5307 Capital Funding in FY 2022 for the Athens-Clarke County Transit Department to increase it from a total of \$1,735,900 to a total of \$1,910,900 (federal: \$1,528,720; state: \$191,090; local: \$191,090). She stated the line items were updated to match the grant application submitted to GDOT Intermodal Programs. The public comment period for the amendment was held March 22 – April 5, and the summary of the public comment received was presented along with a summary of the website traffic recorded during that period. She stated no changes were made to the amendment since the draft version. TCC recommended adoption of the transit amendment to the FY 21-24 TIP as presented.

Ms. Beresford made a motion to adopt the amendment to revise the 5307 capital funding request in the FY 21-24 TIP. Mr. Higdon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

**VIII. REVIEW AND DETERMINATION OF AMENDMENTS TO MACORTS BYLAWS**

Ms. McDuffie stated MACORTS staff received a request to add the ACC Bike, Pedestrian, & Safety Coordinator to TCC. She noted staff also reviewed the bylaws for additional edits. Several job titles were updated. Language was updated to clarify

that the Oconee County Chairman appoints the citizen representative, and staff added a clear statement addressing the use of virtual meetings. She noted additional public involvement is not required for this item.

Ms. Beresford clarified the appointment of the ACC Planning Commission member as an alternate for the Chair of the ACC Planning Commission, and Mr. Simpson requested the position of Georgia Department of Transportation Commissioner, currently Russell McMurray, be replaced by the Georgia Department of Transportation Planning Director Jannine Miller. TCC recommended adoption of the MACORTS Bylaws as presented with the additional changes.

Mr. Higdon made a motion to adopt the amendments to the MACORTS Bylaws. Ms. Beresford seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

## **IX. REVIEW AND DETERMINATION OF AMENDMENT TO FY 2022 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM TO AMEND TRANSIT PROJECT**

Ms. McDuffie explained that this amendment adds the Transit Development Plan to the UPWP Transit Planning Element 4.2 to be funded with Section 5307 funds which are not usually included in the UPWP. She noted this amendment was requested by GDOT's consultant that is reviewing the Section 5307 applications. Staff addressed the recommendations and added a table to show the 5307 funding. She noted additional public involvement is not required. TCC recommended adoption of the amendment to the FY 22 UPWP as presented.

Ms. Beresford made a motion to adopt the amendment to the FY 22 UPWP. Mr. Higdon seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

## **X. OLD BUSINESS**

- Discussion Regarding Future Virtual vs. In-Person Meetings – Update from TCC meeting

Ms. McDuffie updated the group on discussions that took place at the last TCC meeting about the determination when/if to return to in-person committee meetings. She stated that the FHWA representative, Ms. Day, suggested that the MPO should document the process of communicating and coordinating with the local governments and make the decision after coordinating with the local government representatives. FHWA advised staff to coordinate with local governments as they reopen and assess the operations of the MPO, keeping in mind the input of the local governments and Open Meetings regulations. TCC tabled this item until their next meeting, which would allow more time to get feedback from their local governments' preference of virtual or in-person meetings.

Ms. Beresford stated concerns about the determination for virtual or in-person meetings because the ACC government is still uncertain about their direction moving forward.

Mr. Henson asked about a blended option for the meeting being both in-person and virtual. Mr. Caiafa asked if the blended option is accessible for the local governments, and Ms. Beresford stated the ability to host a hybrid meeting is very difficult and challenging with technology capability for each government. Mr. Higdon also stated the difficulty of hosting blended meetings due to the need to communicate with each other both ways. He also stated his preference for virtual PC meetings due to the advantage of flexibility that allows for better attendance. Ms. Decker and Ms. Finch from GDOT stated they would prefer to have virtual meetings or at least have an option to phone into the meeting. Mr. Higdon stated that if the board decides to go with the virtual option, there is always an option to have an in person meeting for critical issues. Mr. Simpson confirmed with staff that attendance for the TCC & PC meetings has been better since the MPO started virtual meetings last year. He also noted the virtual option allows for GDOT to participate in the meetings for the MPO more easily and frequently.

Ms. Beresford recommended an updated Policy Committee member list be sent out to help identify the affiliation of each member. She noted since the meetings are not in-person, the side bar conversations are not there to help identify who each member is. Ms. McDuffie noted after the meeting is over, staff is available (after the recording has stopped) to stay on the Webex meeting to discuss any upcoming issues or concerns of the board.

After some discussion the board clarified the MPO public outreach efforts are effective and allow people to join the committee meetings. Ms. McDuffie stated the meetings are posted on the website and anyone can attend once they contact staff for the password for the meeting. When the public contacts staff, it allows to monitor how many people will be in attendance as well. She also noted that anyone can request the video/recording of the meetings be sent to them at any time. Ms. McDuffie also noted the videos are not posted on the website due to server storage concerns.

Mr. Higdon made a motion to continue virtual meetings for the Policy Committee meetings at their discretion and leave the option for the TCC members to choose their format preference of meeting at their discretion. Mr. Henson seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

## **XI. NEW BUSINESS**

There was none.

## **XII. ADJOURN**

Mr. Daniell adjourned the meeting at 10: 48 am and stated the next PC meeting is scheduled for June 9, 2021.