

**MACORTS Technical Coordinating Committee
A-CC Planning Department Auditorium
Wednesday, June 24, 2015
10:00 a.m.**

Members Present: Brad Griffin - ACC Planning Department
BR White - Oconee Planning Department
Cherie Varnum - ACC Planning Department
Butch McDuffie - Athens Transit System
Tom Caiafa - GDOT Planning Office
Ron Hamlin - UGA Campus Transit System
David Clark - ACC Transportation & Public Works
Emil Beshara - Oconee Public Works
Adam Layfield - Oconee Public Works
Wayne Provost - Oconee Strategic & LR Planning Dept.
Steve Decker - ACC Traffic Engineering
Doc Eldridge - ACC Chamber of Commerce

Others Present: Kyle Mote - GDOT Planning
Sarah Bell - Public
Gretchen Elsner - Public
Russ Page - Public
Don Walter - UGA Campus Transit System

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Griffin called the meeting to order at 10:02 am.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

Gretchen Elsner identified herself as an avid cyclist and spoke about the need for dedicated bike lanes, greenway, and supporting alternative modes of transportation. She recently had an accident while traveling on her bicycle to Sandy Creek Park on US 441. She outlined her concerns about the importance of public pathways/greenways and providing dedicated space for pedestrians and cyclists.

III. APPROVAL OF MARCH 25, 2015 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. White made a motion to approve the March 25, 2015 TCC meeting minutes. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

IV. REVIEW OF DRAFT ADMINISTRATIVE MODIFICATIONS TO FY 2015 – 2018 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FOR GREENWAY ENHANCEMENT, RAIL TO TRAIL, & US 441 / SR 24 SOUTH WIDENING PROJECT SCHEDULES AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Mrs. Varnum stated that the following changes qualify as administrative modifications; therefore, there will be no additional public involvement required. The Greenway project construction phase had been moved from FY 15 to FY 16, and the cost estimate had been revised. The Rail to Trail project construction and utility phases had been moved from FY 15 to FY 16, and the construction cost estimate had been revised. The PE phase of the US 441 project had been moved from FY 15 to FY 16 with no change in the cost estimate.

Mr. Caiafa stated the Project Number (PI#) for the US 441 project had changed from 122660 to 0013613. Mr. Clark asked if the alignment had been decided for this project, and Mr. Beshara stated that there is a proposed alignment for initial consideration (a route to the east of Bishop). Mr. Beshara stated that GDOT has been out in the area to do some survey work.

Mr. Caiafa recommended approval of the administrative modifications to the FY 15 – 18 TIP to revise the schedules and cost estimates for the Greenway Enhancement, Rail to Trail, and US 441 Widening projects. Mr. Beshara seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

Mr. Provost asked when the public will be notified once the administrative modifications are complete. Mr. Griffin stated the modifications will go to the Policy Committee. The final changes will be posted on the MACORTS website. Mr. Provost requested the complete changes be sent out to the TCC members for their records.

V. OLD BUSINESS

There was none.

VI. NEW BUSINESS

Updates:

Oconee County Public Works

Mr. Beshara stated construction of the Mars Hill Project Phase I is going well; however, the ROW acquisition for Mars Hill Project Phase II is not going as quickly as projected. He stated the initial project completion date was July 18, 2015, but they will not be able to meet this deadline. The let date for Mars Hill Phase II has been moved to June 2016 from December 2015. Mr. Beshara stated they are working with consultants and trying to get all of the properties certified no later than September 2015.

Athens-Clarke County Transportation & Public Works Department

Mr. Clark stated the Whitehall Hill reduction project is still on schedule and will hopefully be completed several weeks before the July 31st deadline. He stated that Whitehead Road will be closed between Tallassee Road and Kirby Lane

(Whitehead/Tallassee roundabout project) from June 29 through the entire month of July in order to do utility and grading work before school begins. Mr. Clark stated Tallassee Rd. will not be closed, and the detour will be back toward Jefferson Road.

Mr. Clark stated that they have finished all of the design work and ROW acquisition for the College Station Road bike lanes from Research Drive to Barnett Shoals Road. This project has been programmed for a September advertisement for bids with an award from the commission scheduled for the November meeting.

Athens Transit System

Mr. McDuffie stated they have awarded the Transit Services Feasibility Study to RS & H out of Savannah, GA and the initial kick-off meeting was the first week of May. Mr. McDuffie stated some of the TCC members may be contacted to be stakeholders. He also stated the study would continue for about a year, and it will look at the different transit options throughout the community.

Mr. McDuffie stated the Mayor and Commission approved Sunday services for the Athens Transit System, and it will begin in conjunction with the regular Fall Service. He also stated the hours of Sunday service would be at the same level as Saturday service, and will begin on August 16. The weekend bus service will operate from 7:30 am to 10 pm and there will be 8 routes/buses with hourly frequency. Mr. McDuffie stated the program is in the Mayor's budget as a pilot program, and they will monitor it as they always do with all of their routes (ridership per hour/mileage/revenue/etc). He also stated generally it takes a route 2 to 3 years to develop potential ridership. The goal for the Sunday service is to reach the current average daily Saturday ridership which is 1,500 passengers daily.

University of Georgia Campus Transit System

Mr. Hamlin stated they are hopeful that they will receive funding from a TIGER grant for 16 electric buses (should know by September). The buses will cost a little more, but there will be less engine maintenance required.

ACC Chamber of Commerce

Mr. Eldridge stated that AthFest is this weekend, and it was expected to be very crowded.

Mr. Griffin stated the MPO would be attending the GAMPO work session on June 26. He stated there would be a change in the way the PL funds are distributed to the MPO's starting in FY17. The carryover funding amounts will no longer go to the MPO's, but will be collected statewide and awarded to MPO's on a competitive basis. It will be the responsibility of the MPO's to request additional funding for specific purposes. He stated he would follow up with the committee after the meeting at GAMPO. Mr. Provost asked for more explanation about the carryover funds. Mr. Griffin stated it is the portion of the PL funding that MACORTS receives annually that is not expended. Historically, the funds that we do not spend roll over and allow opportunity to put away the money for purposes such as the update of the Long Range Transportation Plan. There was some discussion about this process.

Mr. Provost asked about developing a subcommittee from TCC to come up with recommendations for special studies to ensure that all of the funds are used. Mr. Griffin

stated that could be an option. He also stated he would place the carryover funding discussion on the agenda for the next TCC meeting and would give a report about what was discussed at GAMPO with the group. Mr. McDuffie stated the Transit Feasibility Study has been awarded as a 5 year On Call Transit & Transportation studies contract that may offer future transportation study opportunities. Mr. Griffin stated that he thinks that does offer the MPO an opportunity to conduct regional planning studies to be determined by the group.

VII. ADJOURN

The next meeting is scheduled for July 22. The meeting adjourned at 10:28 am.