

Summary Minutes of
MACORTS Technical Coordinating Committee
A-CC Planning Department Auditorium
Wednesday, February 24, 2016
10:00 a.m.

Members Present: Brad Griffin – ACC Planning Department
Sherry McDuffie - ACC Planning Department
Cherie Varnum – ACC Planning Department
Darius Malone - GDOT Planning Office
Kim Coley - GDOT District 1
Steve Decker - ACC Traffic Engineering
BR White - Oconee County Planning Department
Emil Beshara - Oconee County Public Works
Butch McDuffie - Athens Transit System
David Ballard – Athens Transit System
David Clark - ACC Transportation & Public Works
Don Walter- UGA Transit
Pamela Thompson - ADDA

Others Present: Kyle Mote - GDOT Planning Office
Janet Burns-GDOT District 1
Lee Becker - Oconee citizen
Russ Paige - Oconee citizen
Ann-Marie Day-FHWA
Aaron Hernandez-FHWA

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Griffin called the meeting to order at 10:00 am. Ms. Coley introduced Janet Burns, a new employee of the GDOT- District One Preconstruction Division. Ms. Day introduced Aaron Hernandez with the FHWA Environmental team.

II. PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

There was no public comment.

III. APPROVAL OF JANUARY 27, 2016 MEETING MINUTES

Mr. McDuffie made a motion to approve the January 27, 2016 meeting minutes with two minor corrections. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

IV. REVIEW OF FINAL DRAFT FY 2017 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Mr. Griffin stated that staff is in the process of responding to the latest FHWA comments regarding the FY17 UPWP. He noted that directly after the TCC meeting, staff is going to review the remaining FHWA comments with Ms. Day. He explained there were some timing issues with the carryover PL funds to be competitively awarded this year that make it necessary to approve the unfunded section of the UPWP separate from the rest of the document. The two projects in the unfunded section included the compliance of the LRTP and purchase of traffic counting equipment. The meeting held by the PL Funding Formula Distribution Committee on March 31 will decide about the competitively awarded leftover PL funds.

Mr. Beshara asked about a corridor study for Oconee County to address the Epps Bridge Parkway and SR 316 from the county line to the Barrow County line. There was some discussion about how to fund the proposed corridor study. Ms. McDuffie stated there could be a possibility for funding of the corridor studies; however, corridor studies are the lowest priority for use of the PL unused funds. Ms. McDuffie stated that there were three tiers of projects that could be funded based upon the letter sent from the state Transportation Planning Administrator. The highest priority was the planning products such as LRTP, TIP and congestion management programs. Second priority was given to MPO documents which enable a MPO to meet other core deliverables, and thirdly were special studies. Mr. Mote stated that one of the positive things about the new change of process for handling funds is that contracts will have a term of longer than a year. Mr. Mote explained that the PL committee decides what projects to fund with the leftover PL funds. He also noted GDOT nor FHWA have an official vote; however, they have veto rights.

Mr. Beshara stated the Oconee County Commissioners have a desire to re-evaluate the corridor by updating the SR 316 corridor study that was completed by GDOT in 1996. Mr. Mote stated a scope of work should be submitted before it may be evaluated. Mr. Beshara stated that it would be more reasonable to consider the SR 316 special study for future unused PL funds since a description, scope, and cost estimate were not readily available.

Motion Needed: Mr. Beshara recommended approval of the unfunded section of the FY17 UPWP to allow staff to continue to work with FHWA on the unfunded section of the FY17 UPWP. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

V. RE-EXAMINATION OF PROPOSED AMENDMENT TO THE 2040 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN TO ADD SR 316 AT OCONEE CONNECTOR INTERCHANGE PROJECT AND RECOMMENDATION TO POLICY COMMITTEE

Ms. McDuffie stated the Policy Committee asked that this item come back to TCC for additional review. She explained there was concern that there needed to be more discussion on the local level and Oconee County representatives were not in agreement that deleting the Union Church Road Improvement project and modifying the Mars Hill Widening – Phase 3(R-30) to include PE and ROW was the best course of action.

Mr. Beshara stated there was no opposition for the removal of the Union Church Rd. project; however, there was some concern expressed by a board member regarding the Mars Hill Widening Phase 3. After some discussion, Mr. Beshara stated his original suggestion of a reduction in the funding for R-30 during the 2020-2024 time frames should still be considered. He emphasized that the proposed interchange is the highest transportation priority for Oconee County. He further explained that if the original suggestion is not considered, there would still need to be \$3 million allocated in the 2020-2024 timeframe from another project. Mr. Beshara asked Mr. Clark if he had a project in that time band that could possibly help with the funding needed for the proposed Oconee project. Mr. Clark stated he needed a little more time to review a couple of the widening projects for Athens-Clarke County that could possibly be adjusted. Mr. Griffin stated that Mr. Beshara could ask Madison County as well for possible assistance with funding for the project. Mr. Beshara noted the funds that were to be used for the US 441S project were shifted to 3 bridge projects along the SR 10 Loop in Athens-Clarke County. Therefore, he concluded, funds to be used for the SR 316 interchange should come from other counties' projects.

Motion needed: Mr. Beshara recommended deferring this item until next month so that Athens-Clarke and Madison Counties could evaluate their projects in the 2020-2024 time frame to see if there is \$3 million available to fund this project. Mr. Clark seconded the motion. The vote was unanimous.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

Ms. Thompson asked about the letter that TCC requested be sent to GDOT during the last meeting in reference to the US 441 South widening project. Ms. McDuffie stated the project manager was contacted on the same day of the last meeting to request courtesy copies of information regarding the US 441 S project.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Griffin mentioned staff attended training hosted by FHWA to discuss Performance Measurement Based Planning and Programming. He explained there will be some transition as we move toward our update of the LRTP to include performance measures. He also noted that project selection will be a

different process that is focused more on regional transportation planning instead of the historical allocation of funding between the counties for projects.

Athens-Clarke County Transportation & Public Works Department

Mr. Clark stated the Mitchell Bridge Road project is finally open to traffic. He noted this was a project that Governor Nathan Deal funded through the GTIB grant. Mr. Clark also stated it was one of the first grant projects to make it all the way to construction in the state. Construction was started on the new traffic signal at Riverbend Rd. /South Milledge Avenue, and he expected it to be operational by the end of April. He noted the College Station Road Bike lane project should get started this week but will be slightly delayed due to weather. Mr. Clark stated they will work on the project during the first week of spring break depending on the weather. He stated they are converting Dougherty Street to 3 lanes with on street parking as part of an Athens-Clarke County Commissioners initiative.

Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Day stated the workshop was a good opportunity for all of the MPOs to begin the conversation about getting ready for performance measures. She stated regional coordination will be a priority for MACORTS. She stated that FHWA will be available to help with training for the transition to Performance Based Planning and Programming.

Athens Downtown Development Authority

Ms. Thompson stated on Tuesday, March 8, there will be a Complete Streets Workshop at The Graduate in Athens. Everyone is welcome to attend.

VIII. ADJOURN

Mr. Griffin thanked Mr. White for chairing the last meeting. The meeting was adjourned at 10:30am.