

**Minutes
Technical Advisory Committee
March 8, 2017
9:00 AM**

Members Present	Organization
Brent Thomas	GDOT
Mike Fletcher	Lowndes County
Pat Collins	City of Valdosta
William Eastin	GDOT
Others Present	
Corey Hull	SGRC
Andrew Smith	SGRC
Amy Martin	SGRC
John Dillard	SGRC
Dennis Carter	GDOT
Gary Wisenbaker	Valdosta-Lowndes Chamber of Commerce
Sandra Tooley	Valdosta City Council
Claudia Thompson	GDOT
Cleopatra James	GDOT
Tom McQueen	GDOT

Agenda Item #1 – Call to Order

Mr. Fletcher called the meeting to order at 9:06 a.m.

Agenda Item #2 – Introductions/Roll Call

Mr. Fletcher asked those present to introduce themselves and state their affiliation with the committee.

Agenda Item #3 – Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes

Mr. Fletcher asked the committee members to review the December 7, 2016 meeting minutes. One slight error was pointed out on page 13 and corrected for the approved minutes. A motion was made by Mr. Collins and seconded by Mr. Fletcher to approve the revised minutes. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

Agenda Item #4– New Business

A. TAC Officer Elections

Mr. Collins nominated Mr. Fletcher for Chairman and Mr. Collins for Vice-Chair, retroactively keeping the officer positions the same. These nominations were approved by acclamation.

B. FY2018 UPWP and Budget – Resolution FY2017-7

Mr. Hull went over the FY2018 UPWP budget and summary sheet. \$122,000 in federal funds are anticipated with a match from local funds including SGRC, the City of Valdosta, and Lowndes County. A slight difference from years past is more funds are allocated to long range planning due to new FHWA and FTA rulemakings regarding performance measures even though this is not a LRTP update year. The Trump Administration delayed their effective date, but the MPO will have at least 3 to 4 amendments to the 2040 TVP to achieve compliance with these new rules in the next fiscal year. Otherwise, the budget is largely the same. Mr. Collins asked about FHWA trainings, and Mr. Hull stated that these will occur more in late spring due to the administration change and delayed FHWA rollout. A motion was made by Mr. Collins to approve the FY18 UPWP and Budget and was seconded by Mr. Thomas. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

C. Discretionary PL Funds (If Needed)

In Georgia, fifteen MPOs have available to them approximately \$7 million in federal funds. Mr. Hull emphasized that these funds need to be used. Mr. Hull directed the committee to look over two recommendations for studies put forward by Lowndes County: an Interstate 75 Master Plan Study and a Circulation Study. According to Mr. Fletcher, the I-75 master plan would examine gateways, aesthetics, and land use. Mr. Collins discussed the Florida gateways at the state line and how he hoped he would see something similar come to Lowndes County. The circulation study is proposed to help better understand traffic flow along primary traffic corridors and could potentially help with the 2045 LRTP. No dollar amounts were associated with these application forms; however, 80% would be federal and 20% would come from local sources. Ideally, 10% of the local money would come from the City of Valdosta and the other 10% from Lowndes County, which is similar to the traffic signal optimization study. The cost was estimated by the TAC to be between \$150,000 and \$200,000 for each study. The TAC expressed concerns about local fund availability due to tight department budgets. Mr. Fletcher made a motion to recommend to the PC to approve the PL Fund applications for these studies with Mr. Collins seconding the motion. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

D. Transit in Valdosta Urbanized Presentation

Mr. Dillard gave a presentation on the Valdosta Pilot Shuttle program which previewed the final report that will be released towards the end of March. Drafts of Chapters 1 and 2 were distributed for review prior to the meeting. Chapter 1 of the report will outline survey results and ridership data. Chapter 2 contains information and data pertaining to a cost-benefit analysis. Chapter 3 is currently being drafted and will address eight different scenarios for capital cost of contracting and how to fund a public transportation system in Valdosta and Lowndes County. Mr. Hull reminded the committee that the cheapest scenario overall may not be the best for the local community. This requires an understanding of the specific funding sources needed for sponsoring a fixed public transportation system. Mr. Collins asked about the average number of riders being 42 for the pilot shuttle and how that would substantiate the argument for public transportation in the community. Members of the committee reflected on personal experiences seeing buses in other cities empty while visiting, which is why smaller vehicles are recommended for implementation in Valdosta and Lowndes County. Mr. Thomas recommended private funding sources while Mr. Collins discussed advertising to help increase ridership.

E. Amend FY15-18 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and TVP – Resolution FY2017-8

Mr. Hull directed the committee to an agenda addendum detailing changes in annual cost estimates for three GDOT projects in Lowndes County. These projects are Exits 22 and 29 scheduled to be let in June 2017, right-of-way acquisition for Exit 2 scheduled to be let in February 2019, and right-of-way acquisition for Exit 11 scheduled to be let in May 2019. Cost estimate changes for each of these projects are significant. The MPO sought conditional approval to recommend these cost estimate changes so GDOT can move forward with the letting of Exits 22 and 2019 before the end of FY 2017 along with ROW acquisition for Exits 2 and 11 before the end of FY 2017. This would involve staff conducting a 30 day comment period and a public open house; however, if there are major comments, the approval would not go forward and those comments would have to be addressed by a called meeting of the Policy Committee. FHWA has agreed to allow VLMPO to do this backwards similar to Macon in the past year. Mr. Hull discussed the specific changes for each projects' phases. Exits 22 and 29 are together and the utility phase was reduced by \$1 million while construction increased by \$11 million. This change is due to an increase in the cost of construction materials and miscalculations in the amount of site work required for those two sites. Exit 2 ROW acquisition is more than doubling from \$6.1 million to \$13.25 million. Exit 11 ROW acquisition is going from \$2.5 million to \$13.24 million. Both are due to miscalculations. The GDOT Project Manager, Ms. Cleopatra James, further explained the changes in these figures, primarily because of an increase in pavement quantities and parcel increases for ROW acquisition. Mr. McQueen commented about sight distances getting corrected while undertaking these projects. Mr. Hull asked the TAC for a recommendation for conditional approval pending a 30 day public comment period for these projects. A motion was made by Mr. Fletcher and seconded by Mr. Collins. The vote was unanimous, and the motion carried.

Agenda Item #5– Staff Update

A. MPO Performance Measures Fact Sheets

Mr. Hull gave broad details on the development of MPO Performance Measure Fact Sheets regarding congestion, pavement condition, and bridge quality. More information on this will be available at upcoming meetings.

B. Regional Transportation Sales Tax

On February 28th, Mr. Hull and other SGRC staff presented to regional elected officials and staff in Waycross about the possibility of having another regional TSPLOST. Using the state's enabling legislation in early February 2017, Charlton County passed a resolution asking the other seventeen counties in the region to form a regional transportation roundtable. As of the CAC meeting, five (5) counties have signed onto this resolution including Charlton, Ben Hill, Irwin, Brooks, and Clinch counties. This would aim for the November 2017 ballot. The regional commission shares the facts with other communities and will be a neutral body in this process. GDOT has asked the counties to pass a resolution either in support or against forming a regional roundtable by late March or early April. This only applies to counties and not cities. The MPO is subject to strict federal lobbying regulations and Mr. Hull did not want the MPO taking any action in this matter. 10 counties are needed (50% plus one) to add this to the November 2017 election ballot. August 4th is the state deadline for including this measure on the ballot. Mr. Hull answered further questions about this agenda item.

C. MPO Freight Movement Study Series Report #4

Mr. Smith gave an overview of the fourth report in the VLMPO Freight Movement Study Series that dates back to 2009. This report titled "Innovative Traffic Management At or Near Congested Railroad Crossings" identifies crossings with AADT counts of over 10,000 vehicles and possible strategies to mitigate on-road congestion during train events. This includes preemption of traffic signals, signage, and road marking and is consistent with MUTCD rules and policies.

D. PPP Funding Report

Mr. Smith summarized a report entitled "Public-Private Partnerships for Infrastructure in Lowndes County" that was completed in early January 2017. This report explains the concept of a PPP and ties it back to local planning goals found in the Greater Lowndes Comprehensive Plan, the 2040 Transportation Vision Plan, and the Common Community Vision. Bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure is a central focus of this report along with state enabling legislation in Georgia through the Public-Private Facilities Infrastructure Act of 2015 (PPFIA).

Agenda Item #6 – Privilege of the Floor/Public Comment

Mr. Fletcher opened the floor for public comment, and Mr. Collins commented about safety issues at Exits 16 and 18 not being prioritized properly in relation to projects approved through the TIP amendment. Mr. Fletcher talked about poor sight vision at Exits 2 and 11 getting off of the interstate and how he hoped this could be corrected with these upcoming projects.

Agenda Item #7 - Next Meeting Date and Time

The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 7, 2017, 9:00 AM at the SGRC office.

Agenda Item #8 – Adjournment

Mr. Fletcher made a motion to adjourn and was seconded by Mr. Collins. The meeting was adjourned at 10:22 AM.