

**MINUTES
POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
November 14, 2023**

Chairman Dan Perdue called the meeting to order at 10:32 a.m. Handouts were distributed to include: (1) Agenda; (2) Minutes of the August 8, 2023 meeting; (3) GDOT PM1/Safety Targets; (4) PP page 9; (5) UAB map; (6) CRS slides; and (7) WRATS Project Status Report.

ATTENDEES

Jessica Bird	John Harley	Bryan Wood	Laura Mathis
Terry Wood	LaRhonda Patrick	Tim Thomas	Roy Lewis
Ted Hicks	Dan Perdue	Vanda Radovic Lewis	
Harland Smith*	Jackie Williams*	Tiffany Sandefur*	Olivia Lewis*

*participated via Zoom

A motion was made by Mr. John Harley and seconded by Mr. Bryan Wood to approve the August 8, 2023 minutes as circulated. The motion was passed unanimously.

Adoption of PM1/Safety Performance Targets for 2024

Ms. Jessica Bird had distributed a table showing the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) PM1/Safety Performance Targets for calendar year 2024 and the previous five years. She explained that the targets are based on a five-year rolling average and the 2024 targets are the same as 2023. According to Ms. Bird, GDOT had to submit its targets to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) by August 31, 2023. The MPOs have 180 days to either support GDOT's targets or set their own. She said the deadline for the MPOs is the end of February 2024. Ms. Bird explained that GDOT kept the same targets as 2023 to be consistent with the Governor's Office of Highway Safety (GOHS). GDOT's targets have been trending upward and the GOHS's targets must be constant or improving.

Ms. Laura Mathis with the Middle Georgia Regional Commission (MGRC) asked about the large difference in the number of serious injuries between 2020 and 2021. Ms. Jessica Bird explained that a uniform definition for serious injury was established for crashes beginning in 2021.

Mr. Bryan Wood made a motion to adopt GDOT's PM1/Safety Performance Targets for 2024. Mr. John Harley seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Participation Plan Discussion

Ms. Jessica Bird provided page 9 of the current Participation Plan (PP) that included information on the public review of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). She reminded the committee members of FHWA's request to change the PP to include a

statement about having the public comment period close before the TIP is discussed at the TCC meeting. Ms. Bird said she reviewed participation documents of other MPOs and asked FHWA for sample language but such language does not exist. She also spoke with Warner Robins City Attorney, Ms. Julia Mize, who supports keeping the PP as written. It already includes a statement that the public comment period will end and comments will be addressed before the PC adopts the TIP. Ms. Bird also explained that the project information and financial figures are provided by GDOT and can change regularly due to the balancing of funds by congressional district.

There was some discussion about meeting virtually if our regularly scheduled meetings were disrupted by the public comment period. Ms. Jessica Bird explained that she must have an in-person quorum in order for committees to take action. Mr. Ted Hicks with GDOT Planning and Ms. Olivia Lewis with FHWA both said that the in-person quorum requirement comes from the state open records law. Ms. Olivia Lewis explained that FHWA would like the MPO to have the public comment period close, have both the TCC and the PC review and address any comments, and then have the adoption of the document.

Several committee members began taking turns reading aloud his/her version of revised language with regard to the public comment period for the TIP. Ms. Jessica Bird explained that ending the public comment period before the TCC meets could change when all three WRATS committees meet. Chairman Dan Perdue said that because we are being asked to change the language, then a called meeting may be necessary to address the TIP.

There was also discussion about using the words “recommend”, “take action”, “consider for adoption”, or “adopt”. Then, the discussion turned to what happens if the TIP is not adopted before GDOT adopts the STIP and the STIP is approved by the governor. Ms. Olivia Lewis explained that the MPO could operate under the current TIP unless the last fiscal year of that document had passed. The committee agreed on the following changed language in the PP regarding public comment on the TIP. “Once the public comment period has closed, the TCC will meet to review, address comments, and make a recommendation to the PC. The PC will meet to adopt the TIP prior to GDOT adopting the STIP.”

Mr. Roy Lewis made a motion to amend the language in the PP regarding the TIP public comment. Mr. Bryan Wood seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Adjusted Urban Area Boundary Discussion

The U.S. Census Bureau released a list of urban areas after its 2020 Count stated Ms. Jessica Bird. A territory is defined as urban or rural based on population density. An urban area has 50,000 or more people, a small urban area has 5,000 to 49,999 people, and a rural area is all population, housing, and territory not included within an urban area. Identification as urban or rural is used for FHWA purposes like functional classification and roadway reporting. Each committee member had a map showing both the 2020 Urban Area Boundary (UAB) and GDOT’s proposed 2020 Adjusted UAB for Warner Robins. The adjusted UAB has smoothed the irregularities of the original UAB by using geographical landmarks like roadways and bridges for the boundary she explained.

Smoothing the UAB is an administrative action and Mr. Terry Wood, Interim MPO Director, has already approved the 2020 Adjusted UAB proposed by GDOT. Ms. Bird announced that Perry was designated as a small urban area; however, it is still included in the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) of WRATS. The MPA must include the smoothed UAB and any contiguous areas likely to become urbanized in twenty years.

Update on Special PL Funds: 2050 MTP

Ms. Jessica Bird announced that the Georgia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (GAMPO)/PL Funds Committee met last week on November 6 and 7. Ms. Bird explained that although the change from meeting in early October to early November pushed her planned Request for Qualifications (RFQ) schedule out a month, the RFQ has been advertised and is out for bid. She said the bids will be opened on November 30 at 2:00 p.m. An Evaluation Committee made up of TCC members from the jurisdictions and the MGRC will be reviewing RFQs and meeting in early December and she hopes to have the contract awarded and a project kickoff in early 2024.

Carbon Reduction Strategy Information

Ms. Jessica Bird explained that GDOT's consultant, Modern Mobility Partners (MMP), shared a PowerPoint presentation on the GDOT Carbon Reduction Strategy (CRS) with the TCC in October. Ms. Bird provided printed presentation slides to committee members and summarized that the presentation included information on outreach efforts, document overview, and opportunities to review and provide feedback. She emphasized that the main objective of the CRS is to identify available funding and provide information on types of strategies included in the high-level categories: Innovative Technologies and Modes, Operational Efficiency Improvements, and Sustainable Infrastructure. The FHWA submission deadline is tomorrow, November 15.

Update on WRATS Project Status Report

Mr. Harland Smith, GDOT District 3 Planning and Programming Liaison, briefly reported on some of the projects. The committee members had a copy of the report that was presented to the TCC in October.

Mr. Bryan Wood with the City of Perry asked who is responsible for letting E911 know when modifications have been made to a roadway. He used the example of the completed roundabout project on SR 247 Spur at SR 247. Mr. Harland Smith said he thought that was coordinated between the GDOT Area Office and the GDOT Project Manager. He said he would find an answer and report back.

Chairman Dan Perdue thanked GDOT for choosing to construct a local detour instead of routing traffic well out of the way as part of the bridge replacement project on SR 7/SR 127 at Big Indian Creek in Perry.

There being no further business, Mr. John Harley made a motion to adjourn. Mr. Roy Lewis seconded the motion and the motion was passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 11:21 a.m.

DRAFT