
BATS MEETING MINUTES

Brunswick Area Transportation Study Policy Committee (PC) Meeting

Monday August 10, 2020 - 1:30 p.m.
Via Teleconference

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks (Michael Browning)
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes- Action Item
 - a. Minutes from PC meeting held on June 8, 2020
3. BATS FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment – Action Item
4. BATS 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update Adoption – Action Item
5. BATS Administrative Updates
 - a. BATS FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Admin Mod
 - b. Annual Title VI Questionnaire
 - c. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Updates
 - d. GAMPO Special PL Funding Applications
 - e. 5303 Transit Planning Grant Application
6. Agency Updates
 - a. Glynn County Airport Commission
 - b. Glynn County School Board
 - c. Glynn County
 - d. City of Brunswick
 - e. GDOT District 5
 - f. Jekyll Island Authority
 - g. Transit Agencies
 - h. Other Items
7. Public Comment
8. Adjourn

Next Policy Committee Meeting: Monday, October 12, 2020

Brunswick Area Transportation Study
Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday August 10, 2020 - 1:30 p.m.
Via Teleconference

ATTENDEES

Committee Members

Michael Browning, Chairman of BATS Policy Committee
Ben Slade, Chairman of BATS Citizens Advisory Committee
Byron Cowart, GDOT Planning Representative
Garrow Alberson, Brunswick City Engineer
Jones Hooks, Jekyll Island Authority
Cornell Harvey, Mayor, City of Brunswick
Tom McQueen, GDOT
Regina McDuffie, City Manager, City of Brunswick
Tanet Myers, Assistant City Manager, City of Brunswick
Robert Burr, Director of Glynn County Airport Commission
Julie Martin, City of Brunswick
Ralph Staffins,

Others

Vishanya Forbes, Transportation Planner, RS&H
Rachel Hatcher, Senior Planner, RS&H
Vivian Canizares-Delgadillo, GDOT Planning
Jennifer Humphreys, CDM Smith
Adam Ivory, CDM Smith
Melissa Phillips
Michael Plagens, CDM Smith
Sean Thomas, GDOT Planning

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:30 pm by Mr. Michael Browning, Chairman of the BATS Policy Committee. Mr. Browning gave the welcome and introduced the committee members.

2. Approval of Minutes – Action Item

a) Minutes from PC meeting held on June 8, 2020

Mr. Browning spoke on this agenda item. He stated that there were minutes from the PC meeting held on June 8, 2020, and these minutes were distributed to committee members prior to today's meeting. Mr. Browning called for a motion to approve the minutes from the PC meeting held on June 8, 2020. A motion was made by Mr. Harvey to approve the meeting minutes from June 8, 2020 as presented. Mr. Hooks seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

3. BATS FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment – Action Item

Mrs. Hatcher spoke on this agenda item. She stated that BATS staff received a request from GDOT to carry out an amendment to the BATS FY 2018-2021 TIP on June 11, 2020. She added that the requested amendment is to add a proposed new project, PI# 0017411 (I-95 FM Florida State Line to S Carolina State Line – ITS Exp) to the FY 18-21 TIP. She told the committee that only a portion of the proposed project falls within the BATS MPO region, approximately 16.68 miles. She explained the concept of ITS (intelligent transportation systems) to the committee as well as highlighted the funding amounts for preliminary engineering and construction phases, and outlined the pages in the TIP where updates were made. She also reiterated that the BATS FY 2018-2021 TIP Amendment #3 is available on the MPO's website for reference.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that both the TCC and CAC recommended that the PC approve the FY 2018 – 2021 TIP Amendment #3 per GDOT's request and release for a 30-day public comment period.

Mr. Browning asked if the ITS was broadband service for the interstate highway.

Mrs. Hatcher responded that it was, but it was the first step in gathering data on roadway conditions on the interstate, preparing transportation systems for autonomous vehicles.

Mr. Hooks asked if Coastal Georgia, including the BATS region, was on the schedule for getting construction funding for the ITS roadway enhancements.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that she was not aware of the schedule and BATS' place on it and differed to the GDOT staff who may know the answer. She added that the first step in this process is preliminary engineering and design, and the sooner those phases are approved and set in motion, the sooner they will be eligible for construction funds.

Mr. McQueen stated that for the PE phase of the process, the I-95 corridor is next in line for funding.

Ms. Martin asked Mr. McQueen how broadband is laid into the roads.

Mr. McQueen stated that it was to be determined and would be based off the findings from the preliminary engineering and design work. He added that this ties into the ITS enhancements Florida has done on I-95, and with South Carolina soon to begin work on a widening project on I-95, this would be an opportunity to continue the ITS conversation.

Ms. Martin then asked if the companies that give real-time traffic updates would pay a fee to access that data.

Mr. McQueen stated that he was unsure, but that in the Atlanta region, they are one of the partners on that project. He added that it was a public-private partnership.

Mr. Browning asked if traffic cameras were a part of the Atlanta region's broadband system.

Mr. McQueen responded that it was, and that the cameras are plugged into the broadband cables. He then briefly highlighted possible uses for broadband to the committee.

Ms. Martin stated that the broadband and cameras could help with potential hurricane evacuations.

Mr. Browning added that it would help with traffic accidents and getting motorists to an alternate route.

Mr. Browning called for a motion for the PC to release the FY 2018 – 2021 TIP Amendment for a 30-day public comment period. Mr. Harvey made a motion. The motion was seconded by Ms. Martin. The motion was passed unanimously.

4. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update Adoption – Action Item

Mrs. Hatcher spoke on this agenda item. She gave a brief refresher on the 2045 MTP and the importance of this document for metropolitan planning organizations. She stated that the 30-day public comment period closed on July 31, 2020, and comments were provided by oversight agencies, BATS staff, and Glynn County staff. The final draft version of the 2045 MTP Update and SSI Sector Study incorporates comments received.

Ms. Humphreys provided the committee with a refresher of the previous actions taken in the MTP update process and highlighted key milestones and dates, including:

- August 2019 – Plan Kickoff
- December 12, 2019 – Public Meetings
- March 6, 2020 – Public Meetings
- April 29, 2020 – Virtual Public Meeting
- July 13, 2020 – Virtual Public Meeting

She then continued to provide a brief overview of the performance measures/metrics, and goals and objectives of the 2045 MTP. Mr. Humphreys stated that the Virtual Public Information Meeting that was live from July 16 – July 31, 2020 had approximately 700 visitors with 83 signed-in visitors and four comments received. She stated that there were no comments received that required modifications to the draft MTP document.

Ms. Humphreys then went on to provide the committee with an update on the St. Simons Island Sector Study. She stated the three steps used for the purpose of focusing on the specific needs and potential solutions for mobility challenges on St. Simons Island:

- Evaluating growth projection,
- Analyzing mobility challenges,
- Presenting context-sensitive recommendations

She stated that a mobility analysis and a cost/benefit analysis were performed on roadway segments in the study. She added that an island access analysis was also completed, looking at two possible builds for a new bridge to St. Simons Island. She explained the differences between the builds, with Build 1 having a 14% reduction in traffic on the Torras Causeway and Build 2 having a 26% reduction in traffic on the Torras Causeway. The recommendation from this analysis is a no-build scenario, with opportunities for development if land use patterns change.

She stated that during the Virtual Public Information Meeting, there was a separate section for feedback on the St. Simons Island Sector Study. She pointed out that this section of the meeting received the same number of visitors as the 2045 MTP section, but there were ten comments received. She added that a lot of the comments received were from members of the public who were interested in what the recommendations from the SSI Sector Study would look like. Ms. Humphreys then outlined the next steps for the SSI Sector Study to the committee, highlighting that this will include incorporation of public comments and a finalization of the study by August 30.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that the TCC and CAC unanimously recommended that the BATS Policy Committee adopt the BATS 2045 MTP with SSI Sector Study pending the completion of the SSI Sector Study. She added that there was one recommended modification from GDOT that will be incorporated, regarding changing the title of Project 10 which is a restriping project on I-95.

Mr. Browning opened the floor to questions and comments.

Ms. McDuffie asked about the types of zoning represented in a map in the 2045 MTP, referencing a type of zoning that was not indicated for the City of Brunswick versus Glynn County and St. Simons Island.

Ms. Humphreys stated that they recently received an updated land use map and will check to see if that issue has been addressed in the updated map.

Ms. Thompson stated that she would check with County Staff to ensure all the zoning and land use information was accurate.

Ms. McDuffie explained that there were government and public parcels that were omitted from the Brunswick zoning/land use map in the 2045 MTP.

Ms. Thompson reiterated that she would check on that information and follow up with any updates.

Mr. Browning called for a motion from the PC to adopt the BATS 2045 MTP with SSI Sector Study, pending the completion of the SSI Sector Study. Mr. Hooks made a motion. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harvey. The motion was passed unanimously.

5. BATS Administrative Updates

a. BATS FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Admin Mod

Mrs. Hatcher provided the committee with the administrative updates. She stated that BATS staff received a request from GDOT on July 24, 2020 to carry out an administrative modification to the FY 2018 – 2021 TIP. The administrative modification reflects changes to the program year for PI 0013993 (SR 32 @ Little Buffalo Creek 3 Mi W of SR 27) from 2020 to 2021. She added that there is no action needed and this agenda item is for informational purposes.

There were no questions or comments.

b. Annual Title VI Questionnaire

Mrs. Hatcher spoke on this agenda item. She stated that as part of the federally mandated planning process, MPOs are required to submit an annual Title VI report for audit review to GDOT. She mentioned the importance of following the 3-C (Continuous, Cooperative, and Comprehensive) Planning Process and reaching out to disadvantaged members of the community to make sure they are able to participate in the planning process, programs, and services. She highlighted the focus areas of the questionnaire, including:

- Public input/Participation Process
- Monitoring and Review Process Related to Contracts
- Outreach
- Limited English Proficiency
- Training
- Self-Monitoring
- Goals for Upcoming Fiscal Year

She stated that a copy will be submitted to GDOT and a copy will be placed on the BATS MPO website. She added that BATS has fulfilled and met all the requirements of the report and succeeded in some areas as well.

There were no questions or comments.

c. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Updates

Mrs. Hatcher addressed this agenda item. She gave a brief overview of the UPWP schedule, which includes the FY 2020 ending on June 30, 2020 and FY 2021 beginning on July 1, 2020. She provided the committee with a brief overview of FY 2020 UPWP Updates and Highlights:

- Fiscal year ended on June 30, 2020
- Staff has finalized quarter 4 and closeout documentation for FY 2020 UPWP and submitted to GDOT for review
- Staff will provide MPO with final annual report of all FY 2020 activities once the review process has been completed
- Successful development and administration of special PL projects:
 - Lanier Gloucester Intersection Improvements – Completed
 - 2045 MTP with St. Simons Island Sector Study – Underway
 - Bay Street Corridor Improvement Study – Awarded
- BATS successfully updated the Public Participation Plan (PPP) that was last updated in 2015.
- BATS successfully updated the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that was last updated in June 1995
- BATS staff has maintained consistent coordination and collaboration with FHWA and GDOT (Planning and Intermodal Offices) partners during the development of all planning documents
- BATS successfully carried out a comprehensive, cooperative and continuous planning process with the development of the annual work program

Mrs. Hatcher briefly stated the planning priorities for FY 2021. Those include:

- Supporting the public review and adoption of the BATS 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) will be a primary focus for FY 2021
- Monitoring and completing all special PL funding projects awarded to the MPO in previous fiscal year.
- Supporting the 2020 U.S. Census count and all related activities within the MPO area. Additionally, staff will be coordinating efforts with the Glynn County Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Department monitoring all changes that may affect the MPO region.
- Maintenance of administrative documents and standard operating procedures for the BATS MPO to ensure continued compliance with annual self-certification requirements and to enhance the local planning process
- Update of current FY 2018 – 2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Special Project Development: Bay Street Corridor Improvements Study will be another primary focus for BATS in FY 2021
- MPO staff will continue the implementation of the State's performance targets, as well as facilitate and make available the annual update of the Systems Performance Report.

She explained the Federal 3C Process and the FY 2022 UPWP Schedule of Activities. She encouraged the committee members to give their feedback and what transportation activities they would like to see in FY 2022 because of the lull after submittal of the 2045 MTP. She stated that BATS staff will email committee members a form to provide input for planning priorities that may be incorporated into the draft FY 2022 UPWP.

d. GAMPO Special PL Funding Applications

Mrs. Hatcher spoke on this agenda item. She provided the committee with a refresher of the GAMPO Special PL funding schedules. She stated that the BATS MPO has missed the deadline for submittal of projects for the September 2020 round of GAMPO Special PL funding. She added that the next round for submittals is in Spring 2021. She stated that the only BATS study that has been vetted and ready to move forward in this process is the MLK – Altama Bike Route Study. She recommended to committee members to share their ideas for projects and that BATS staff will help formulate the scope of work and prepare them for this application process. She shared additional information about the MLK – Altama Bike Route Study, including maps and scoring factors.

e. 5303 Transit Planning Grant Application

Mrs. Hatcher addressed this agenda item. She refreshed the committee on the process and timeline for the 5303 Transit Planning Grant Application. She explained the 5303 Activity Line Items and how they relate to planning activities and the planning process. She stated that the BATS MPO is going to present to other MPOs throughout the state about how the relationship between an MPO and a transit agency look like. She briefly highlighted the typical timeline for a funding application, as well as the estimated FTA 5303 funds for FY 2022.

Ms. Thompson stated that Mrs. Hatcher and Ms. Forbes are doing an amazing job making BATS a model MPO and that they are very thorough in the work they do.

Mr. Browning thanked Mrs. Hatcher and Ms. Forbes for the work they do and introduced Ms. Forbes to the other committee members. He then asked if there were any questions or comments.

6. Agency Updates

a. Glynn County Airport Commission

Mr. Burr provided updates on Airport projects. He stated that they received 100% federal funding for projects for the current fiscal year through the CARES Act. He added that the projects on St. Simons Island are moving ahead and are on schedule.

Mr. Browning stated that the Kingsway – Federica roundabout project has a lot of preliminary work being done and is going to be released for bids.

b. Update on School Board Projects

There were no school board project updates presented at this meeting.

Mr. Browning stated that there is a new school being built on Altama and that the committee should be participating in the conversation around school board projects.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that there is school board representation in the TCC, and she will encourage those members to participate in the PC meetings. She added that the bylaws and Public Participation Plan (PPP) will be reviewed and updated to include COVID-19 protocols. She stated that BATS staff will work with Ms. Thompson to see if there are ways in the bylaws to have non-committee members sit in on meetings.

Ms. Thompson stated that BATS staff met with the head of construction of the school board last fall to discuss the new elementary school project and agreed to have regular meetings to talk about capital improvements they were planning. She added that this was so they could coordinate construction projects with any traffic changes.

Further discussion continued over synchronizing construction projects and traffic and infrastructure modifications.

c. Glynn County

Mrs. Hatcher provide updates on County projects. She told the committee that there was a project update sheet provided as part of the meeting packet.

There were no questions/discussions on the County projects.

d. Update on City Projects

Mr. Alberson provided updates on City Projects. He stated that the L Street project is still underway, and halfway through with phase two with late October as the completion date for the entire project. He mentioned that the commission recently approved the contract for Magnolia Park project with work to begin in the next couple of months. He added that work is still being done on the MLK Bike and Pedestrian Trail project as well as the kickoff meeting for the Bay Street Corridor project was recently conducted with the consultant team and will also begin in the next couple of months.

Ms. McDuffie stated that there was a pre-construction meeting recently held for the Gloucester St. resurfacing project.

Mr. Alberson added that they were waiting on additional information from the contractor about the Gloucester St. resurfacing project.

e. Update on GDOT Projects

Mrs. Hatcher spoke on this agenda item. She stated that Mr. Cowart will not be the GDOT engineer for the BATS region, but in the interim Mr. Pittman from GDOT will provide the GDOT project updates. She added that there are no new projects on the GDOT project list, but that existing projects were ongoing.

Mr. McQueen provided brief updates on each of the preconstruction GDOT projects. He stated that after the TIP update, projects will see updated dates for project phases including right-of-way and construction.

Mr. Edwards stated that for PI 0001036 (SR 32/SR 99 widening from SR 99 to I-95), the contract has been removed from the project update list due to the funding being in long-range. He added that the project will be picked back up closer to the funding date.

f. Jekyll Island Authority

Mr. Hooks stated that GDOT recently completed the accel and decel lanes at Jekyll Causeway and US 17 which has helped with traffic issues and accidents at that intersection.

Mr. Browning asked if there was anything going on with the toll booths.

Mr. Hooks stated that the technology used at the booths has changed, moving to a tags system from a transponder system. He added that the new system seems to be working well, except on Saturdays because of capacity issues.

g. Transit Agencies

There were no Transit Agencies updates presented at this meeting.

7. Public Comment

No comment from the public.

8. Adjourn

Mr. Browning reminded everyone of the next regularly Policy Committee on October 19, 2020.

He thanked everyone for their participation and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:45 pm.


BATS PC Chairman

Date