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## **BATS MEETING MINUTES**

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### **Brunswick Area Transportation Study Policy Committee (PC) Meeting**

Monday June 14, 2021 – 1:30 p.m.

Via Teleconference  
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#### **AGENDA**

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks (Cornell Harvey)
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Action Item
  - a. Minutes from PC meeting held on April 12, 2021.
  - b. Minutes from special called PC meeting held on May 10, 2021.
3. Special PL Funding Project (Bay Street Corridor Improvements) - Action Item
4. BATS Citizens Advisory Committee Membership Applications 2021 – Action Item
5. BATS Administrative Updates
  - a. GAMPO Special PL Funding Applications – Fall 2021
  - b. BATS FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)
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
  - i. Public Comment
7. Adjourn

***Next Policy Committee Meeting: Monday, August 9, 2021.***

**Brunswick Area Transportation Study**  
**Policy Committee Meeting Minutes**

Monday June 14, 2021 - 1:30 p.m.  
Via Teleconference

**ATTENDEES**

Committee Members

Mayor Cornell Harvey, BATS PC Chairman  
Pamela Thompson Glynn County Community Development  
Jones Hooks, Jekyll Island Authority  
Julie Martin, City of Brunswick  
Robert Burr, Glynn County Airport Commission  
Jim Gilligan, BATS CAC Chairman  
Cassius Edwards, GDOT  
Radney Simpson, GDOT  
Ned Green, GDOT Planning  
Walter Rafolski, Glynn County Board of Commissioners  
Regina McDuffie, City of Brunswick  
Dave Austin, Glynn County Public Works  
Tom Caiafa, GDOT Planning  
John Hunter, Planning & Zoning, City of Brunswick

Others

Rachel Hatcher, Senior Planner, RS&H  
Vishanya Forbes, Transportation Planner, RS&H  
Justin Dammons, Transportation Planner, RS&H  
Jonathan Guy, Kimley Horn  
Erin Granados, Forward Brunswick  
Katie Proctor, GDOT District 5  
Dr. Lesley Leonard, College of Coastal Georgia  
Ben Slade  
Troy Pittman, GDOT  
Jon Osgood

## **1. Welcome and Introductions**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:30 pm by Mayor Cornell Harvey, Chairman of the BATS Policy Committee. Mr. Harvey gave a welcome and asked staff to perform a roll call.

## **2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Action Item**

- a. Minutes from PC meeting held on April 12, 2021.**
- b. Minutes from Special Called PC meeting held on May 10, 2021.**

Mr. Harvey stated that there were two sets of minutes for approval from prior Policy Committee meetings, including one held on April 12, 2021 and a Special Called PC Meeting held on May 10, 2021. He called for a motion to approve the minutes as presented. A motion was made by Ms. Julie Martin. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Walter Rafolski. The motion passed unanimously.

## **3. Special PL Funding Project (Bay Street Corridor Improvements) - Action Item**

Mr. Guy presented this agenda item. He provided the committee with a brief refresher of the study overview and the priorities of the study, which included:

- Developing a coordinated plan for the entire corridor
- Identifying mobility issues along the corridor
- Developing solutions for identified area(s) along the study corridor that enhance mobility for all modes
- Developing an action plan that shows how public and private entities can work together to realize results

He also provided the committee with a brief refresher on the elements of the plan, corridor characteristics, transportation strategies, and the implementation plan. He highlighted the stakeholders that were involved with the corridor project, and shared the feedback provided by stakeholders. He went on to explain the project goals and objectives, including how each objectives feed into the project goals. He reviewed the importance of freight and rail access in the corridor, with three terminals located in the BATS region. He highlighted corridor crash data, mentioning that 721 crashes occurred along the Bay St. corridor, with 401 crashes at the Blythe Island intersection.

Mr. Guy continued, stating that the 2035 corridor capacity data is telling the story of where Bay Street corridor is heading. He then discussed in further details the four segments of the Bay Street Corridor presented in the 2035 Horizon Year Segment Capacity Summary table on slide 10 of his presentation. He explained to the committee that Segment 1, which is a major commercial area, decreases in Vehicles per Day (VPD) capacity as it gets closer to 303-Blythe Island. Segment 2 also decreases its VPD capacity just past south of the intersection with 303. Mr. Guy went on to further explain that data indicates an increase in the capacity for VPD transitioning down into the community. Mr. Guy stated that the summary table of the 2035 Horizon Year Segment Capacity provides a good snapshot of where BATS is at when the daily

volumes/ average annual daily volumes is paired with the operational analysis performed for the intersections.

Mr. Guy then outlined three Level of Service (LOS) maps for the Bay Street Corridor, 2020, 2025 and 2035, stating that this information aids with building recommendations moving forward. He further explained LOS to the committee stating that “the level of service is a measure of delay at an intersection for either the overall intersection (signalized) or approach (unsignalized)”. Mr. Guy added that each analysis of the level of service at certain intersections helps to build recommendations going forward.

Mr. Guy continued stating that after carefully analyzing the Bay Street Corridor, there are four unique areas along the corridor. He added that this is a primary freight corridor with peak hour congestion at key intersections that needs to be addressed. He also noted that speeding needs to be further addressed, especially in the segment south of 303 to Newcastle where Bay Street splits. Mr. Guy mentioned that overall crashes are relatively low on the corridor except for at the Blythe Island and 341 intersection. Additionally, he stated that the lower section of the corridor does have additional capacity, and there needs to be enhancements. He then outlined the methodology for how his team evaluated each of the recommendations-sharing a summary table of existing conditions and major goals that were adopted by the committee earlier in the development of the study. These included:

- Identify mobility issues along the Bay Street Corridor
- Maintain and enhance the efficiency and safety of the corridor’s segments and key intersections and between key land uses
- Support intergovernmental cooperation between all local jurisdictions in the project area as well as local, regional, and state agencies
- Enhance the appeal of the corridor for all users
- Enhance the current and emerging economic drivers in the community

Mr. Guy explained to the committee that there are many ways to accommodate the stated goals, which are very important when moving into transportation strategies. He also highlighted the importance of recognizing how to translate goals and objectives, and pair quantitative analysis and qualitative statements. He further explained the design considerations with the qualifiers:

- Most satisfies the objective criteria
- Moderately satisfies the objective criteria
- Least satisfies the objective criteria

to stay on track with the goals and objectives, and quantify what are more qualitative statements, throughout the process.

Mr. Guy then moved into the proposed recommendations for each segment of the Bay Street Corridor discussed earlier. He started with recommendations at Exit 36 at I-95 and provided an overview of the issues identified for the segment. He mentioned that there is a significant amount of activity along this corridor, and that it consists of heavily auto-based features for movement of motor vehicles. Mr. Guy mentioned that there is a need for improvement because of the high crash potential along this part of the corridor given the fact that there is a driver population that might not be familiar with the area, since it is

adjacent to the interstate, and because there are many driveways. He then mentioned that the first recommendation is to work with GDOT to consolidate driveways. He outlined that, as a first example, there are three driveways in close proximity to each other at a gas station. He then suggested that closing one or two of those would make a reduction in sideswipe, angle crashes which data indicates is high types of crashes along this corridor and most likely rear end crashes as well. The next recommendation was centered around "How do you approach an interchange and know which lane to get into?" Mr. Guy stated that by enhancing the implementation of pavement markings to I-95 South and to I-95 north well before the interchange would be a big help. He continued by mentioning that if implemented, there will be a reduction in crashes long term and a reduction in sideswipes. Mr. Guy mentioned that this would clarify which lane drivers need to be in so they can pre-position the vehicles, which would cause drivers to be less likely to make a quick maneuver to change lanes.

The next set of recommendations highlighted was for US 341 at Blythe Island Highway. Mr. Guy mentioned a dual southbound left turn location would need to be implemented in the long term and needs prioritization over the additional recommendation of the right turn lane. He continued by mentioning that this is one of the first major corridors across the peninsula, where there is a need for left turn lanes when there are approximately 300 vehicles per hour at the peak hour that make the maneuver. Mr. Guy further stated that this recommendation will take time and partnership but needs to be done. He added that other enhancements include the preemption timing with the fire station to help recovery, remarking crosswalks for the pedestrians and enhancing the ramps for pedestrians as well, and consolidating driveways that are almost touching the intersection, by moving driveways and conflict points back.

Mr. Guy moved on to the recommendation for the next intersection at Newcastle St. at Fourth St. These recommendations were more focused on improving pedestrian connectivity with Selden Park and the neighborhood. He stated that the proposed recommendation is to realign Ross Road's entrance into Selden Park, so the crosswalk becomes a more perpendicular movement through 341, making for a smoother transition. Mr. Guy further discussed that this would help reduce conflict time and maintain the left turn onto 4<sup>th</sup> Street and into the park, creating an island for the pedestrians to stage. He added that this was a main issue with members of the public that want to access Selden Park but not cross 341.

"Islands help create a visual contrast to the rest of the corridor" stated Mr. Guy, further explaining that individual will then slow down and pay attention to the road with this difference in their scenery along the roadway. Mr. Guy told the committee that the island can be implemented for pedestrians to cross a half section of 341 at a time, improving and enhancing safety for pedestrians crossing into the park.

The next set of recommendations Mr. Guy highlighted for the Bay Street Corridor were for Newcastle Street at Bay Street. Mr. Guy mentioned that speeds are not transitioning until drivers are well approaching F Street, and people should be slowing down far before the roundabout. Mr. Guy mentioned that his recommendation of implementing a roundabout, along other alternatives to improve operations and safety at Bay and Newcastle Streets, with the potential for right turn lane to be determined in design development from Bay Street onto Newcastle street. He mentioned that the area has the geometry already present for the roundabout to be implemented and operationally, it improves access to the port as well. Trucks can benefit from roundabouts as well and he mentioned the example of the Savannah Terminal in Garden City. He went on stating that pedestrians would continue to have their network and

can be enhanced further to Bay Street. He added that due to the island, it is a great gateway into downtown that would still accommodate the land uses. He also shared with the PC that they did look at a fourth leg of the roundabout, but it was not proposed due to the existing railroad, which would possibly cause closure to I street and even F street for a single access point.

Mr. Guy moved on to the recommendations for the Bay Street Enhancement – Plantings. He stated that this is a five-lane corridor but also has additional shoulder intersections on the outside. He explained that the recommendation is a desire to utilize this area in a different matter that improves pedestrian connectivity with Mary Ross Park and Downtown. He also mentioned that other ways were considered to enhance the visual appeal of the Bay street corridor. Mr. Guy mentioned that this is through selective planning and reuse of the shoulder space. Additionally, he stated that work with the railroad companies will help provide a sense of arrival and still accommodate the traffic that is needed to service the port.

Mr. Guy continued with his update highlighting recommendations for the Bay St. improved crosswalk at Gloucester St. He began by explaining that enhancing this crossing and reutilizing the space on West Gloucester St. with a recommendation to take away one travel lane in each direction, would allow for the space to be reutilized by putting in a new connected sidewalk that places pedestrians right into the park and can also extend along the opposite side. Mr. Guy further recommended additional parking across from the playground that could bring people into the playground. Mr. Guy also made the recommendations of evaluating the feasibility of removing the left-turn lane on Bay Street onto Gloucester Street, and enhancing the current railroad crossing for pedestrians with a wide landing area that creates a safe crossing for the pedestrian.

Mr. Guy then continued to overall recommendations. He stated that there is a need for more parking especially on Bay Street and that there is not much data out there. He also mentioned that there should be a downtown parking study on a normal day or on a day when there are festivals. He added that the MPO should determine where the needs of the community are, including determining where hot spots, capacity, and where the longest dwell times occur. He mentioned that this provides answer long term questions and design needs, and that this recommendation should be prioritized. Mr. Guy added that, priority wise, enhancing crosswalk configuration should be prioritized first since that will get BATS the most connectivity between downtown and Mary Ross Park and builds upon existing investments made in the corridor as well as it is quicker to implement. Mr. Guy mentioned that as this recommendation moves forward, the MPO should look at the enhancement of existing shoulder areas along Bay Street.

Mr. Guy moved on to the last recommendation, US 17 and 4<sup>th</sup> Street. He stated that this is a long-term improvement, possibly for,2035. He mentioned that he sees the opportunity to address future concerns with overlapping movements as downtown begins to grow, the volumes along the corridor increases. The implementation of a roundabout between 4<sup>th</sup> and US 17 would be great. He mentioned that it would be a minor improvement in the scheme of things and more of an operational and safety improvement.

Mr. Guy continued with updates on the Implementation Plan. He stated that a simple matrix of location, recommendation, timeframe of when the projects would need to be implemented, and planning level cost ranges was developed for this study. He continued stating that they are based on a variety of projects in the Southeast. He added that since these aren't design plans, the range in cost is dependent on level of

detail, specificity of material, and timeframe. he then mentioned that this would provide the MPO with the opportunity in the long-term to partner with GDOT and FHWA moving forward. Mr. Guy wrapped up his presentation stating that “Bay Street as a corridor has a regional impact but is also a state asset. Therefore, it deserves to be a special street in the community. Connecting it with the people with community assets can benefit a variety of interests.” he then opened the floor for questions.

Ms. Martin thanked Mr. Guy. She then asked if BATS had the implementation plan available as a separate document for easy reviewing.

Mr. Guy said he would be able to pull the implementation plan out as a separate document per the request.

Chairman Harvey then asked for clarity regarding, “if they are moving 4<sup>th</sup> Street to the south a bit from where it comes into the southern part of Newcastle Street.”.

Mr. Guy responded by saying, “Yes...the recommendation is shifting it, the road pavement for pedestrian crossings ever so slightly over a little bit, about a lane width 12-15 feet, roughly. Shifting over gives you that more direct movement between these two (parts of the crossing over Newcastle St.) which creates a safer crossing, the opportunity for offset lefts and helps create a larger median.”

Chairman Harvey then asked if everything shifted into Selden park?

Mr. Guy responded that it is not everything, and just the small shift along 341.

Chairman Harvey asked for any further questions on this agenda item. There were none.

Chairman Harvey called for a motion to endorse the final draft of the Bay Street Corridor Study.

Ms. Forbes mentioned that the BATS CAC and TCC both recommend that the PC endorse the study as presented.

Ms. Martin made a motion for the PC to endorse the final draft of the Bay Street Corridor Study as presented.

The motion was seconded by Mr. Rafolski.

Chairman Harvey asked for further questions or comments. The motion passed unanimously.

#### **4. BATS Citizens Advisory Committee Membership Applications 2021 – Action Item**

Ms. Forbes spoke on this Agenda Item. She reminded the committee that this process began in February where staff published ads and flyers across multiple platforms to reach as many citizens within the community as possible. Ms. Forbes mentioned that the membership drive details, and application were also sent to past CAC members so that they could reapply if interested. Ms. Forbes then stated that this was an action item, and that the committee would need to take action to appoint the new CAC members from the pool of applications presented.

Ms. Forbes shared with the committee that a total of thirteen applications had been received including two from current members. Shae stated that 11 of the 13 applicants were eligible since two applicants lived outside the MPO boundaries. Ms. Forbes then mentioned that the application for membership had closed on April 30, 2021. She then reiterated that per the bylaws there can be no more than 18 members on the CAC committee and no fewer than five members.

She mentioned that a summary of applications was sent out prior to the meeting as a part of their meeting packet. The summary included applicants' names, their Interest to serve on the CAC, and past experience in serving on committees of a similar caliber of the CAC. Additionally, Ms. Forbes stated that staff also compiled an overview of the demographics of those that had applied to be members of the CAC. The demographic profile indicated that of those applicants, two identified as having a disability. 18% of applicants were from St. Simon's Island and 82% were from Brunswick is a complete reverse of the first Citizens Advisory membership Drive that was held in 2017. There were also more females that applied this year, representing 45% of the applicants, 45% males and 9% of applicants did not specify their gender. Ms. Forbes also highlighted that 82% requested for regular membership and 18% requested for an At-Large membership. 9% indicated Other as their race, 27% indicated Black and 55% indicated White.

Ms. Forbes then mentioned that the majority of the applicants (53%) were interested in serving on this committee because of public transportation. Overall Transportation System and Overall Interest in the Process were both at 20% and 7% indicated interest in Traffic Management.

Ms. Forbes then continued to ask that the PC consider keeping the membership drive open to fill the remaining six CAC seats. She mentioned that there are 11 applicants and one member who came into the process after the original appointment. Therefore, there will be 12 active members and six seats open for additional members.

Ms. Forbes continued by reiterating that there will be 12 members and added that there are three actions being asked of the Policy Committee. Recommended actions and suggested motions were presented. Ms. Forbes asked if there were any questions.

Chairman Harvey asked if the individuals were selected or if there was a selection process.

Ms. Forbes responded by saying the selection process would occur today if the PC would like to approve these eleven applicants that submitted applications. Ms. Forbes then asked if they want to go through individually.

Chairman Harvey responded stating "No," the committee proceeded accordingly.

Mr. Hooks then asked Chairman Harvey a question for clarity on what the 18 members comprised.

Ms. Forbes responded that 18 members is the number of available seats on the Citizens Advisory Committee per the BATS bylaws and that its consisted of 13 Regular members and five at large members. Within the five At-Large members, three are from the County and two from City based on population statistics.

Mr. Hooks then thanked Ms. Forbes.

Ms. Forbes then reiterated that the objective today would be to appoint both the regular and at-large members and give staff the directive to fill the remaining seats. Mr. Walter Rafolski then asked Chairman Harvey if he could read the three recommended actions and suggested motions, to which Chairman Harvey agreed.

Mr. Rafolski began with the first listed recommended action, reading

- “Recommend the Policy Committee take action to appoint ‘Regular’ membership from the pool of submitted applications.
- Recommend the policy committee take action to appoint ‘At-Large’ membership and that they be appointed by the respective City and County representatives on the committee.
- Direct staff to continue membership drive to fill remaining seats on BATS CAC following orientation and training of newly appointed members.”

Ms. Martin seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously. Chairman Harvey thanked both Commissioners Martin and Rafolski and asked if there were any further questions or comments.

There were no additional comments or questions on this agenda item.

## **5. BATS Administrative Updates**

### **a. GAMPO Special PL Funding Applications – Fall 2021**

Ms. Forbes spoke on this agenda item. She reminded the committee that the next round of GAMPO Special PL Funding applications is due in September. She went on to provide the committee with a brief refresher of the most recent GAMPO applications submitted on behalf of BATS in the Spring Cycle, for MLK Altama Bike Route Study. Ms. Forbes also mentioned that BATS was successfully awarded funding with the city as the identified local sponsor for that project. Ms. Forbes then mentioned that there are no proposed studies for BATS remaining in the pool of initial applications that was prepared in 2017. She stated that with all four applications that were presented, BATS has been strategic in their submittals to the GAMPO Special PL Funding Committee and as a result has been successful with all four studies (BATS 2045 MTP with SSI Sector Study, Lanier Gloucester Improvement Study, Bay Street Corridor Improvement Study, which is in the process of being wrapped up, and MLK – Altama Bike Route Study).

She then reminded the committee that the proposed projects are required to go through two cycles of MPO meetings and that staff would need to host a series of special called meetings if there is a proposed project for the upcoming Fall submittal. Ms. Forbes then asked if there were any questions on this agenda item, and hearing none she asked Chairman Harvey if she could continue with the administrative updates, in which he agreed.

### **b. BATS FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Ms. Forbes spoke on this agenda item. She stated that staff carried out an administrative modification to the FY 2022 UPWP to accommodate for the GAMPO 2021 Special PL Funds awarded in March. She

reiterated that BATS was successfully awarded funds for the MLK Altama study, and that a GDOT PI Number had been assigned to the successfully submitted project, as well. She reminded the committee of the funding amount and the local match. She wrapped up stating that the updated document has been posted on the MPO website for reference. Ms. Forbes then turned the presentation over to Chairman Harvey to lead the committee through the agency updates.

## **6. Agency Updates**

### **a. Glynn County Airport Commission**

Mr. Robert Burr provided updates on behalf on the Glynn County Airport Commission. He told the committee that the commission finished the parking lot expansion project for the Brunswick Golden Isles airport and that May was the first month that they exceeded the number of passengers for Delta Airlines as compared to May of 2020. He added that the airfield project with the calibration pad is currently underway and they are waiting on financial support from the federal government on projects for the upcoming fiscal year.

There were no questions or comments on airport projects.

### **b. Glynn County School Board**

Ms. Forbes mentioned that Glynn County School Board was not present at the meeting and did not provide an update beforehand. Chairman Harvey then moved to Glynn County to provide an update.

### **c. Glynn County**

Mr. Dave Austin from Glynn County Public Works provided the update for Glynn County. Mr. Austin mentioned that they are working to get the Frederica road projects underway once the permitting is finished. Mr. Austin also mentioned that there is action with Kings Way/Frederica roundabout, and they only need to do thermo from the County point as well and Sea Island is finishing up landscaping.

There were no question or comments on County projects.

### **d. City of Brunswick**

Ms. Forbes mentioned that Mr. Garrow Alberson was not present at the meeting. Chairman Harvey then asked for GDOT District 5 to present their update.

### **e. GDOT District 5**

Ms. Katie Proctor delivered the update for GDOT District 5. In this update, Ms. Proctor mentioned that State Route 25 Spur East at Mackay River Bridge have progressed 41% with environmental activities, preliminary plans have progressed at 29% and the PIOH Response letter is in final review. Ms. Proctor further mentioned that PCRF is routing for approval, and PFPR is anticipated in October 2021.

For the second project, Ms. Proctor mentioned, State Route 25/US 17 from CR 372/Yacht Rd to CR 415/Harry Diggers Blvd – Phase I, the anticipated Let Date has been moved to August. Projects 3, 4, 5, and

6 have stayed the same as last month. Project 3 is SR 25/US 17 widening from Harry Driggers Blvd to SR 99 – Phase II. Project 4 is CR 583/Sea Island Rd. @ Dunbar Creek bridge replacement on St. Simons Island. Project 5 is SR 32 @ Little Buffalo Creek – Bridge Replacement 3 miles West of SR 27. Project 6 is SR 25/US 17 @ SR 99 – Roundabout. Ms. Proctor then asked to move on to active construction projects. She stated that no changes have been made to these projects since the last update. However, they began work on Project 4, 7.13 miles of pavement marking upgrades on I-95/SR 405 beginning N. of Dover Bluff overpass and extending S. of US 25/US 341/SR 27 on April 20, 2021.

**f. Jekyll Island Authority**

Mr. Hooks provided updates for the Jekyll Island Authority. He mentioned that they're still working with the Department of Transportation (DOT) and the engineering firm on the bike paths out on the causeway and that it's an extensive process in terms of the length of time it will take. Mr. Hooks then mentioned that the Jekyll Island Authority is trying to adjust to meet DOT requirements but moved the process along faster than the DOT has asked of them and hopefully have board action the following day on that.

There were no questions or comments on Jekyll Island Projects.

**g. Transit Agencies**

Ms. Forbes referred to Mr. John Hunter to provide transit updates on behalf of the City of Brunswick. Mr. Hunter mentioned that they are still working forward with their consultants for transit options to get their system up and running. He added that they will be doing a presentation update to the City in July.

There were no questions or comments on the City transit updates.

No other transit agencies provided updates during this meeting.

**h. Other Items**

There were no other items presented at this meeting.

**i. Public Comment**

Chairman Harvey then called for Public Comment. Hearing no comments from any members of the public, Chairman Harvey proceeded to Agenda Item 7, Adjourn.

**7. Adjourn**

Chairman Harvey then reminded those on the call that the next Policy Committee meeting would be held on August 9, 2021. Chairman Harvey then returned to the Public Comment to offer a second chance for any member of the public to input a comment. Hearing none, Chairman Harvey thanked everyone for their participation. The meeting ended at approximately 2:30 PM.