Gainesville - Hall
Metropolitan Planning Organization
GHMPO
Flowery Branch - Gainesville - Hall County - Oakwood

POLICY COMMITTEE

Georgia Mountains Center, Rooms A&B
Minutes of November 10, 2009 Meeting

Voting Members Present:
Myrtle Figueras, City of Gainesville
Diane Hirling, City of Flowery Branch
Sam Chapman, Hall County
Lamar Scroggs, City of Oakwood
Tom McQueen, GDOT

Voting Members Absent:
None

Others Present:
Randy Knighton, GHMPO
Srikanth Yamala, GHMPO
David Fee, GHMPO
Billy Powell, Hall County Commissioner
Steve Gailey, Hall County Commissioner
Phil Sutton, Hall County
Jody Woodall, Hall County
Connie Daniels, Hall County
Jason Crane, GDOT
Robert Mahoney, GDOT
Andrew Heath, GDOT
Patricia Clayton, LLCPA
Billy Clayton, LLCPA
Norma Powell, LLCPA
Sandra Convard, LLCPA
Jin Wilkins, LLCPA
Kelly Gardner, LLCPA
Kim Fisher, LLCPA
Jerry Morishige, LLCPA
Paul Dennis, LLCPA
Lyn Smith, LLCPA
Don Slenenpiper, LLCPA
Joe Fincher, LLCPA
Tommy Turner, LLCPA
Dan C. Hall, Jr., LLCPA
Thad Smallwood, LLCPA
Grey Chund, LLCPA
Teri Frazier, LLCPA
Dan McGill, LLCPA
Bill Andrew, City of Flowery Branch
James Riker, City of Flowery Branch
Janice Crow, Hall Area Transit
Larry Sparks, City of Oakwood
Ron Osterloh, Pond & Company
Phillippa Lewis Moss, Gainesville-Hall CSC
Jason Close, The Architecture Group
Stephanie Harmon, GMRDC
Dee Taylor, City of Gainesville
Butch McDuffie, GTA
Debbie Lawson-Davis, LLCPA
Janet Clayton, LLCPA
Sonja Peterson, LLCPA
Carrie Hartfield, LLCPA
Carolyn Williams, LLCPA
James Tully, LLCPA
Tracy Sherwen, LLCPA
Rand Fisher, LLCPA
Deborah Palmer, LLCPA
Jumsl Hz, LLCPA
Kem Slater, LLCPA
Jamie Fincher, LLCPA
Jack Buie, LLCPA
Alice Hall, LLCPA
Gene Brooks, LLCPA
Jenny Buie, LLCPA
Joe Yeager, LLCPA
John W. Gibbs, LLCPA
Thelma Shafer, LLCPA

Jud Davis, LLCPA
Jack Price, LLCPA
Annette Forster, LLCPA
Howard Smith, LLCPA
Milchael Dione, LLCPA
Jason Ulseth, LLCPA
Paul Harris, LLCPA
Jeffery Smith, LLCPA
Jan Albitz, LLCPA
Pat Powell, LLCPA
Leroy Oliver, LLCPA
John Holcomb, LLCPA
Vince Davis, LLCPA
Taylor Davis, LLCPA
J. Kelly Matus, LLCPA
Gary Bradley, LLCPA
Carole Buie, LLCPA
Zsa Wonkowski, LLCPA
Denise Cameron, LLCPA
Linda Steakley, LLCPA
Dennis Martin, LLCPA
Jeb Bates, LLCPA
Linda A. Harris, LLCPA
Thomas Hawn, LLCPA
Lynda D. Jacobs, LLCPA
Laura Harris, LLCPA
Terry Barron, LLCPA
David Vaughan, LLCPA
Steve Burrell, LLCPA
Pat Head, LLCPA
Betsy Wischart, LLCPA
Julie Turner, LLCPA
Gina Rand, LLCPA
Pat DeNote, LLCPA
Amy Britt, LLCPA
Dale Beane, LLCPA
Tom Haight, LLCPA
Kevin Boyd, LLCPA
Mark Montgomery, LLCPA
Gretchen Ruppenthal, LLCPA
Bob Belladonna, LLCPA
Sheila Davis, LLCPA
A. L. Morton, LLCPA
Mike Forster, LLCPA
Yvonne Smith, LLCPA
D. Smith, LLCPA
G. Stout, LLCPA
Susan Wiley, LLCPA
Jim Barco, LLCPA
Britt Harris, LLCPA
Jodie Stephens, LLCPA
Bob Fuss, LLCPA
Kathleen Higgins, LLCPA
Debbie Davis, LLCPA
Carrie Rogers, LLCPA
Susan Bradley, LLCPA
Bud Schenck, LLCPA
Betty Fisher, LLCPA
Mark Carmeron, LLCPA
Ken Steakley, LLCPA
Shirley Hastings, LLCPA
William Head, LLCPA
Turner Wisehart, LLCPA
Wes Turner, LLCPA
M. L. Finnegan, LLCPA
Carolyne J. Miller, LLCPA
Tom Paris, LLCPA
Mary Carol Moore, LLCPA
Laura Wiegand, LLCPA
Raymond Towery, LLCPA
Rosemary Bates, LLCPA
Bettie Nottingham, LLCPA
Bernard Dersnah, LLCPA
Jae Wiegand, LLCPA
Bill Doster, LLCPA
Ron Smith, LLCPA
Sue Sneed, LLCPA
Marilyn Haight, LLCPA
Robin Gravitt, LLCPA
Diana Montgomery, LLCPA
William Ruppenthal, LLCPA

1. Welcome

Mayor Figueras called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and welcomed everyone. She introduced the new GDOT members: Tom McQueen and Andrew Heath. She thanked Jason Crane, GDOT, for his support of the GHMPO over the past several years.

2. Approval of August 11, 2009 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: *Mr. Chapman made a motion to recommend approval of the August 11, 2009, Minutes with a second by Mayor Hirling and passed by a unanimous vote.*

3. Northern Connector Study

Mr. Yamala explained this technical study was conducted primarily to analyze traffic flow on existing roadways through 2030 based on the location of the connector. The concepts that were presented at the last meeting were not intended to depict routes or particular alignments. To address misunderstandings and misrepresentations regarding the study a Fact Sheet was issued to put the study in its correct context and provide accurate information to the public.

Mr. Yamala presented details of what had been happening with the Northern Connector Study since the Policy Committee (PC) met in August. He explained that the Hall County Board of Commissioners had voted unanimously at the September 24, 2009 to recommend that the Gainesville/Hall Metropolitan Planning Organization's Policy Committee remove all proposed concepts except the original GH-066 project from the current 2030 long range transportation plan and further recommended to use existing right of ways, including state routes, for future studies.

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) made a motion to forward a statement to the PC stating that the CAC has heard the comments of Lake Lanier Community Preservation Association (LLPCA) and agree that the group's viewpoint had merit and need to be considered in the future, but they also need to continue the planning process of looking at alternative routes that may be closer to Gainesville than GH-066 and have less impact.

Ms. Lawson-Davis, representing the LLCPA, was in opposition to the conceptual routes 1A through 2B of the Northern Connector Study. LLCPA feels now is the optimum time to eliminate them from further study at taxpayers expense and she explained the reasons why they object: negative environmental and aesthetic impact on Lake Lanier by the construction new bridges, the loss of the Olympic Rowing Venue, cost to taxpayers and impacts on present neighborhoods and loss of property values.

Mr. Chapman made a motion that they not consider the four concepts 1A, 1B, 2A, and 2B as potential routes for the Northern Connector during the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) process; however, project GH-066 would remain an option for discussion as a long range project. The motion died for lack of a second.

Mr. Chapman then made a motion that the only official concept plan to be considered would be GH-066. Mayor Hirling seconded the motion. Before the motion went to vote Mayor Scroggs stated he would like to amend the motion that they make a broader study not just for a Northern Connector but a continuation of the study for a another bypass that would benefit Oakwood, Flowery Branch, Gainesville and all of Hall County.

Mayor Figueras stated she would like to separate this into two motions and not consider the southern portion in the first motion. Mr. Knighton interpreted the motion as being the four concepts, 1A, 2A, 1B, 2B, mentioned would not be a part of this, only the GH-066, which is currently on the adopted long range transportation plan, is the only Northern Connector concept that would move forward as part of a larger evaluation for the 2040 MTP.

MOTION: *Mr. Chapman made a motion to recommend that the only official concept plan to be considered would be GH-066 with a second by Mayor Scroggs and passed by a 3-2 vote (Mayor Hirling and Mayor Figueras opposed).*

Mr. Knighton, offered to meet with the executive committee or representatives of the LLCPA to develop a Northern Connector concept or recommendations that could formally be introduced by the LLCPA through the upcoming MTP. Ms. Lawson-Davis stated they would be honored to serve in this role in an advisory capacity only. The LLCPA agreed there is a need for a Northern Connector.

Mayor Figueras explained that this study was initiated by the Greater Hall Chamber of Commerce who would like to be sure that businesses who locate here can expect an adequate degree of mobility on roads in the future.

Mayor Scroggs made a motion that they further study all of Hall County and not include only GH-066 but if another route is better that it be looked at also to tie together the thoroughfares going in and out of Gainesville as this would be something that would benefit all of Hall County. The motion died for lack of a second. Mayor Figueras told Mayor Scroggs she believed they were not getting a second because they believe the MTP will cover what he is asking for.

4. 2010 State Legislative Agenda

Mr. McDuffie told the PC that the Georgia Transit Association (GTA) has been operating over 15 years and is a group of transit providers, business members and citizens that advocate for better public transportation throughout the state. The need for funding of transit operations remains critical because Georgia is one of nine states that does not partner with local and federal governments to support the operation of public transportation systems. He presented a PowerPoint presentation showing who the providers are and how "taking the bus" benefits the local economy. The GTA is key to helping the state economically; helping to control air pollution, mitigate traffic congestion, etc. A copy of the GTA 2010 State Legislative Agenda was handed out. In February they will have a day at the Capitol where GTA and all their providers will advocate for public transportation. The GTA will host its annual meeting in Athens in December.

5. Update on the Gainesville-Hall Area 2010 Census Complete Count Committee

Ms. Lewis-Moss, co-chair of the Hall County Complete Count Committee, explained the importance of the 2010 census for the County. She stated for each person not counted, Hall County loses $13,000 in Federal dollars over the next ten years. A PowerPoint presentation on the U.S Census was shown and what the census means to the County. A successful census count could result in two more congressional seats, more Federal money available for projects and less local dollars required for projects.

6. City of Flowery Branch Transportation Study

Mr. Riker updated the PC on their Transportation Study grant partially funded by the GHMPO. They have hired a consultant and expect the study to take 3 to 4 months to complete. The study will focus on the downtown area identifying projects and funding sources. The findings will be presented to the PC when the study is completed.

7. Hall Area Transit Maintenance Facility Feasibility Study

Mr. Close gave an overview of the maintenance facility feasibility study for the Hall Area Transit (HAT). The study team toured existing facilities with the City of Gainesville and Hall County to assess present capacity and ability to meet future needs, as well as the potential to share a facility between jurisdictions is being explored as well. The study is expected to take 6 to 7 weeks to complete, and the results will be presented to the GHMPO committees.

8. Administrative Modifications and an Amendment to the 2008- 2013 Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Fee explained the administrative modifications and amendments to the 2008-2013 Transportation Improvement Plan. Most of the projects had the network years changed from 2010 to 2015 for air quality modeling or were resurfacing and maintenance projects under phase II of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA).

MOTION: *Mayor Hirling made a motion to accept the Administrative Modifications and an Amendment to the 2008 - 2013 Transportation Improvement Program with a second by Mayor Scroggs and passed by a unanimous vote.*

9. 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Mr. Yamala explained the development process of the 2040 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). He noted that the planning horizon year of the current Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) was 2030 but will be extended to 2040 for the MTP. Federal requirements mandate that regional transportation plans in metropolitan areas with air quality requirements be updated every four years. The GHMPO expects to have a consultant on board by January 2010 and the plan will be adopted by August 2011.

10. Jurisdiction and Agency Reports

Representatives discussed the status of transportation projects being completed by their jurisdictions: Mr. Sparks for the City of Oakwood, Mr. Riker for the City of Flowery Branch, Mr. Taylor for the City of Gainesville, Mr. Woodall for Hall County and Mr. Mahoney for GDOT.

9. Upcoming Meeting Date

The next Policy Committee meeting is scheduled for March 9, 2010. A list of the 2010 GHMPO meeting dates was distributed.

11. Adjourn

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned by the chairman at 11:45 a.m.

Myrtle Figueras, Chairperson

Connie Daniels, Secretary