



Citizens Advisory Committee

**HR Training Room, 2nd Floor, Hall County Government Center
Minutes of April 25, 2024 Meeting**

Voting Members Present:

Patrick O'Rourke, Hall County – *Vice-Chair*
Berlinda Lipscomb, City of Gainesville
Beverly Nordholz, City of Gainesville
Betsy Wigington, City of Gainesville
Tony Millwood, City of Oakwood
Pat Jones, City of Oakwood
John Rudio, City of Flowery Branch
Rick Marzano, City of Flowery Branch
Billy Edwards, Town of Braselton
Adrienne Rice, Hall County
Brent Hoffman, Hall County
Billy Edwards, Town of Braselton

Voting Members Absent:

Jason Cox, City of Gainesville
Sammy Smith, City of Gainesville
Renee Gerrell, Hall County – *Chair*
Nick Haynes, Hall County
Toni Buffington, Hall County
Kim Jackson, Hall County
Joe Kennedy, Hall County
Jim Southard, Jackson County

Others Present:

Vanessa Foster, Citizen
Joseph Boyd, GHMPO

Michael Haire, GHMPO

1. Welcome – Patrick O'Rourke, Vice-Chair

Mr. O'Rourke opened the meeting at 4:00 PM.

2. Approval of January 25, 2024 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Ms. Jones made a motion to approve of the January 25, 2024 meeting minutes, with a second from Mr. Millwood, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

3. Election of CAC Chair and Vice-Chair for FY 2025

Ms. Gerrell and Mr. O'Rourke received nominations to continue serving as Chair and Vice-Chair, respectively.



MOTION: Ms. Jones made a motion to approve of the nominations for CAC Chair and Vice-Chair for FY 2025, with a second from Mr. Millwood, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

4. First Review of Updated GHMPO Bylaws

Mr. Boyd introduced a routine update to the GHMPO Bylaws, which govern how the three MPO committees are to be organized. The changes made in this update to the CAC Bylaws include the following:

- First meeting of the year has been moved from the last Thursday of February to the last Thursday of January.
- Added text permitting voting via teleconference or phone.

The GHMPO Bylaw updates are anticipated to be adopted during the next round of Committee meetings in July and August.

5. Recommend Approval of Draft Amendment #2 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Boyd introduced the second amendment to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Boyd explained that this amendment updates the funding for two projects and removes a third project from the TIP. Additionally, this amendment makes minor revisions to the Committee membership lists and adds language clarifying which project updates are eligible for amendments vs. an administrative modification. The three projects being updated in this amendment are listed below:

- **Project Update: GH-016 / PI 003626 – Sardis Road Connector from SR 60 to Sardis Road near Chestatee Road**
 - Construction (CST) funding updated from \$36,637,685.00 to \$56,476,681.24
 - Construction (CST) year changed from 2024 to 2025
- **Project Update: GH-020A / PI 122060 – Widening of US 129 from Lakeview Street to south of Nopone Road (Phase I)**
 - Construction (CST) funding updated from \$47,173,294.00 to \$58,108,002.91
- **Project Removal: GH-023B / PI 0015280 – Spout Springs Road Widening Phase II – From Union Circle to South of SR 347**
 - Construction (CST) and Utilities (UTL) shifted from 2024 to 2028

Mr. Boyd received a question from Ms. Wigington regarding whether or not these projects when authorized will pay workers, laborers, and mechanics the wage rates obligated by the Davis-Bacon Act of 1931. Mr. Boyd responded that he would have to ask the Georgia Department of Transportation, as they manage projects that are on state routes. However, because these projects are receiving federal funding, it is assumed that they would be following federal wage regulations.

Mr. Boyd received a comment from Ms. Jones seeking clarification on the language regarding administrative modifications and amendments. Mr. Boyd clarified that project phases that are \$10 million or under may have an administrative modification cost increase of the amount to be authorized if the change is less than \$2 million. For project phases over \$10 million, administrative modifications may be conducted if the increase in cost is less than 20%. Otherwise, an amendment with full committee approval will be required.

The Committee engaged in brief discussion on funding opportunities for phase II of the Spout Springs Road widening, which centered on the potential use of TSPLOST to fund the project and would move the project up by several years.

MOTION: Ms. Wigington made a motion to recommend approval of Draft Amendment #2 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), with a second from Mr. Marzano, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

6. Recommend Approval of Draft GHMPO 2024 Participation Plan

Mr. Haire introduced the final draft of the GHMPO 2024 Participation Plan. Mr. Haire explained that this document was previously included as a part of the Title VI Plan and is now, at GDOT's request, being adopted as a standalone document. The purpose of the Participation Plan is to, for the benefit of the public, outline the procedures for the GHMPO planning process and list the strategies that the MPO uses to solicit public participation. This document is anticipated to be adopted at the May 14th Policy Committee meeting.

Mr. Haire received a question from Mr. Rudio about when GHMPO or GHMPO's Committees would select a public engagement strategy to pursue, to which GHMPO staff explained that the Participation Plan contains a list of strategies that staff pursue to foster public engagement and the contextual use of each strategy is dependent on staff discretion for different planning work tasks. Mr. Boyd mentioned that language in the Participation Plan could be expanded to specify which public participation strategies are used for specific work tasks. Mr. Haire and Mr. Boyd briefly discussed the strategies for gathering input that large GHMPO projects like the Metropolitan Transportation Plan have utilized and will continue to utilize.

The Committee engaged in brief discussion regarding GDOT's public engagement process for the State Route 365 Planning Study, and strategies that could be employed to boost public participation in planning studies – including strategies that would utilize the Citizens Advisory Committee members directly.

MOTION: Ms. Jones made a motion to recommend approval of Draft GHMPO 2024 Participation Plan, with a second from Mr. Millwood, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

7. Recommend Approval of Draft GHMPO 2024 Title VI Plan

Mr. Haire introduced the Draft GHMPO 2024 Title VI Plan, which serves as an update to the 2021 Title VI Plan. The purpose of the Title VI Plan is to ensure that GHMPO does not discriminate against any members of the public when conducting planning activities. The Title VI Plan outlines the processes through which the public can file a Title VI complaint against GHMPO, and lists out all previous investigations, complaints, and lawsuits, of which there are none to date. This document is anticipated to be adopted at the May 14th Policy Committee meeting.

MOTION: Ms. Jones made a motion to recommend approval of Draft GHMPO 2024 Title VI Plan, with a second from Ms. Nordholz, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

8. Other

Mr. Haire provided a presentation on the 2020 Base Year and 2055 Do-Nothing Travel Demand Models. Mr. Haire provided an overview of the Travel Demand Model, explaining that its purpose is to serve as an analysis tool to forecast travel demand and transportation performance, replicate the existing trip making characteristics, forecast future travel demand, and identify transportation network deficiencies.

The 2020 Base Year Travel Demand Model uses the 2020 Base Year Socioeconomic (SE) Data to model existing traffic conditions and travel demand, providing a level-of-service (LOS) rating for major roads in the GHMPO planning area. The 2055 Do-Nothing Travel Demand Model projects demand out to 2055 based on the 2055 Base Year SE Data, and provides a projected LOS if no more roadway improvements were completed between now and then, aside from projects that already have their construction funding committed in the GHMPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Haire received a question about the small increase in university enrollment in the 2055 SE data, to which he responded that it is difficult to accurately project out university enrollment because that does not follow a predictable growth rate like population growth or employment growth do.

Mr. Haire received a question about the number of lanes included on State Route 365 in the 1st and 2nd network models, to which he responded that it would be only be two lanes on these models due to a widening not being under construction at this time. If an outcome of the State Route 365 Planning Study is a new widening project on the corridor, then conditions in the future year of 2055 would change.

The Committee engaged in discussion of congestion on I-85 going south from Gainesville, as well as the branding initiatives being conducted by the City of Gainesville on newly improved overpasses.

Mr. Haire provided a brief update on the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update, as well as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Update, which will begin utilizing public engagement strategies in the coming months.

Mr. Boyd briefly discussed the draft application for the City of Hoschton Transportation Master Plan, which the MPO plans to apply for additional PL funds for in September. The Committee briefly discussed the City of Hoschton's representation on MPO Committees.

Mr. Haire provided an update on the State Route 13 / Atlanta Highway Corridor Study, which went out to bid on April 23rd, and will likely commence later in the summer.

Mr. Boyd briefly discussed the Hall County, Georgia Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Action Plan, which is currently underway. Mr. Boyd explained for the Committee that once the action plan is in place, the County will be able to apply for SS4A implementation grants to fund the improvements recommended by the plan.

The topic of roadway safety led to a discussion on the potential TSPLOST vote that could occur in November of 2024, and the draft project list that the County has circulated internally of projects that would utilize TSPLOST funds. Mr. Boyd stated that he would invite the County or the City of Gainesville to come speak to the CAC at their July meeting if the TSPLOST moves forward with a November 2024 vote.

9. TCC Agency Report

Mr. Boyd briefly discussed some of the notable project updates from the TCC Agency Report.

10. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

11. Upcoming Meeting Date: July 25, 2024

Mr. O'Rourke reminded the Committee that their next meeting would be on July 25, 2024.

12. Adjourn

There being no other items of business, the meeting adjourned at 5:00 PM.


Renee Gerrrell, Chair


Michael Haire, GHMPO