



Policy Committee

**Commission Meeting Room, 2nd Floor, Hall County Government Center
Minutes of February 11, 2025 Meeting**

Voting Members Present:

Chairman Marty Clark, Jackson County, Chair
Chairman David Gibbs, Hall County
Commissioner Kathy Cooper, Hall County
Commissioner Jeff Stowe, Hall County
Mayor Sam Couvillon, City of Gainesville
Mayor Ed Asbridge, City of Flowery Branch
Megan Weiss, GDOT

Voting Members Absent:

Mayor Lamar Scroggs, City of Oakwood

Others Present:

Chris Rotalsky, City of Gainesville
Corey Jones, City of Gainesville
Dan Schultz, City of Oakwood
Chris McCrary, City of Flowery Branch
Dan Branch, City of Buford
Casey Ramsey, Hall County
Bill Nash, Hall County
Brent Cook, Hall County

Beth Garmon, Hall County
Gina Roy, Jackson County
Justin Lott, GDOT
Mary Flatt, GDOT
Joseph Boyd, GHMPO
Michael Haire, GHMPO
Jeff Gill, Gainesville Times

1. Welcome – Chairman Marty Clark, Chair

Chairman Clark opened the meeting at 10:00 AM.

2. Approval of December 10, 2024 Meeting Minutes

MOTION: Commissioner Stowe made a motion to approve of the December 10, 2024 meeting minutes, which received a second from Mayor Asbridge, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

3. Update from the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

Mr. Boyd provided the committee with a brief recap of the most recent Technical Coordinating



Committee meeting, which took place on January 29, 2025. The TCC unanimously recommended approval of all agenda items.

4. Update from the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Mr. Boyd provided a brief recap of the most recent Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, which took place on January 30, 2025. The CAC unanimously recommended approval of all agenda items.

Mr. Boyd informed the Policy Committee that there was much discussion by CAC members regarding developments occurring along corridors where roadway widening is scheduled to occur. He stated that he has asked the Hall County Planning Director, Beth Garmon, to come speak to the CAC at their next meeting on April 24, 2025 about the relationship between land use decisions and long-range transportation plans.

5. Approval of the Draft 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Fiscally Constrained Project List

Mr. Haire provided an overview of funding changes that have affected the project list since the December Policy Committee meeting, and introduced four projects that were added to the project list. Mr. Haire gave an additional overview of the remaining projects previously included in the Fiscally Constrained Project List, engaging with Committee members when clarifications or additional information were needed. Mr. Haire then discussed next steps, which is the completion and review of the final report by the three GHMPO Committees, and the final approval of the plan at the next Policy Committee meeting on May 6, 2025.

MOTION: Commissioner Stowe made a motion to approve the Draft 2025 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Fiscally-Constrained Project List, which received a second from Chairman Gibbs, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

6. Approval of Draft Amendment #5 to the FY24-27 Transportation Improvement Program/Draft Amendment #10 to the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan

Mr. Boyd introduced Draft Amendment #5 to the FY 2024-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), which contains all projects receiving funding between the fiscal years of 2024-2027, as well as Amendment #10 to the 2020 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). The update being made to the TIP and RTP with Amendment #5 are below:

- New Project: GH-150 / PI 0020731: State Route 365 Widening from I-985 to Belton Bridge Road in Lula
 - Pre-Engineering (PE) funding added for FY 2026 in the amount of \$10,000,000.00.

This project was previously included in Amendment #4, but was tabled at the December 10, 2024 Policy Committee meeting over concerns regarding the funding source. GHMPO, in consultation with GDOT, later met with Policy Committee members to discuss and resolve any remaining concerns.

MOTION: Mayor Asbridge made a motion to approve Draft Amendment #5 to the FY24-27 TIP / Draft Amendment #10 to the 2020 RTP, which received a second from Commissioner Stowe, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

7. Approval of Draft FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Haire discussed the final draft of the FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program, which is the annual operating budget for the MPO, funding all planning activities and any additional studies GHMPO would like to do. This draft of the FY 2026 UPWP contains finalized funding amounts for FHWA's PL grant and FTA's Section 5303 grant. Additionally, a new Work Element (4.6 – Air Quality) has been created to describe the work that GHMPO does with the Atlanta Regional Commission regarding air quality conformity. Lastly, Mr. Haire discussed the potential studies listed within the UPWP that GHMPO and local jurisdictions could choose to pursue in FY 2026 – namely, the Oakwood-Flowery Branch Connection Trail Study, which GHMPO could do utilizing the base PL grant, and the State Route 13 (Oakwood) Corridor Study, which would require applying for additional PL funds.

MOTION: Mayor Couvillon made a motion to approve the Draft FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program, which received a second from Mayor Asbridge, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

8. Approval of Draft Application for US DOT's Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grant Program

Mr. Boyd highlighted the US DOT's Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grant Program. This program is designed to provide funding for planning activities and infrastructure improvements that increase the resiliency of the transportation network against extreme weather events and natural disasters. GHMPO intends to apply for a Planning Grant, which will fund the development of a Resiliency Improvement Plan. After a Resiliency Improvement Plan is in place, GHMPO and local agencies will be able to apply for additional PROTECT funding to begin implementing improvements identified in the Resiliency Improvement Plan. GHMPO is applying for \$400,000.00 to develop the plan with no local match required for PROTECT Planning Grants. GHMPO intends to apply prior to the February 24, 2025 deadline.

MOTION: Commissioner Stowe made a motion to approve the Draft Application for US DOT's Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Savings Transportation (PROTECT) Grant Program, which received a second from Chairman Gibbs, and the motion passed by unanimous vote.

9. Update on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Mr. Haire briefly discussed the development of the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. The Steering Committee met on January 29th to provide feedback on draft recommendations and prioritization criteria, and the project team is now working on refining their recommendations based on that feedback and developing the final report. The final report will be sent out to GHMPO Committee

members prior to the next round of GHMPO Committee meetings, which begin at the end of April, for any final feedback or comments. The Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is anticipated to be approved by the GHMPO Policy Committee at the May 6, 2025 meeting.

GHMPO and the project team are also planning on holding a final Public Open House for the project, which will be held from 5:00 – 6:30 PM on February 18, 2025 at the Gainesville Public Safety Complex. To consolidate meetings and not inundate the public, this meeting will feature the final recommendations from the Metropolitan Transportation Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan, and the State Route 13 / Atlanta Highway Corridor Study.

10. Update on the State Route 13/Atlanta Highway Corridor Study

Mr. Haire briefly discussed the development of the State Route 13 / Atlanta Highway Corridor Study. The project team has provided a draft list of recommendations, which is currently being revised based on feedback from GHMPO, Hall County, and City of Gainesville staff. These recommendations will be on display at the February 18th Open House. The State Route 13 / Atlanta Highway Corridor Study is anticipated to be approved by the GHMPO Policy Committee at the May 6, 2025 meeting.

11. Update on the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan

Mr. Boyd provided an update on the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan. This plan will provide a prioritized list of recommendations for safety improvements for vehicles and pedestrians throughout Hall County. A draft project list has been provided to the Steering Committee and is currently being developed into a prioritized list. These recommendations will be on display at the February 18th Open House. The Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan is anticipated to be approved by the GHMPO Policy Committee at the May 6, 2025 meeting.

12. Other

There were no other items for discussion.

13. Jurisdiction and Agency Reports

Representatives shared the status of projects being completed by their jurisdictions: Mayor Asbridge for the City of Flowery Branch, Mr. Schultz for the City of Oakwood, Mr. Jones for the City of Gainesville, Mr. Lott for the Georgia Department of Transportation, Mr. Cook for Hall County, and Ms. Roy for Jackson County.

14. Public Comment

There were no public comments.


15. Upcoming Meeting Date

Chairman Clark reminded the Policy Committee of their next meeting date on May 6, 2025.

16. Adjourn

There being no other items of business, the meeting adjourned at 10:35 AM.


Chairman Marty Clark, Chair


Joseph Boyd, GHMPO