
BATS MEETING MINUTES

Brunswick Area Transportation Study Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting

Monday July 13, 2020 - 4:00 p.m.
Via Teleconference

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks (Ben Slade)
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes- Action Item
 - a. Minutes from CAC meeting held on May 28, 2020
3. BATS FY 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment – Action Item
4. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update – Information
5. BATS Administrative Updates
 - a. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Updates
 - b. GAMPO Special PL Funding Applications
 - c. 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 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting: Monday, September 14, 2020

Brunswick Area Transportation Study
Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, July 13, 2020 – 4:00 p.m.

Via Teleconference

ATTENDEES

Committee Members

Melissa Ennis-Roughton

Ed Ellis

James Gilligan

Ben Slade

Ed Farley

Steve Holt

Wally Orrel

Melinda Ennis-Roughton

Others

Ely Yokley-Zarka

Vishanya Forbes, Transportation Planner, RS&H

Rachel Hatcher, Senior Planner, RS&H

1. Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was called to order at approximately 4:00 p.m. by Mr. Ben Slade, Chairman of the BATS Citizens Advisory Committee. Mr. Slade gave the welcome and turned the meeting over to Ms. Forbes.

2. Approval of Minutes – Action Item

a. Minutes from CAC meeting held on May 28, 2020

Ms. Forbes addressed this agenda item. She stated that there is a set of meeting minutes from the CAC meeting held on May 28, 2020, for approval. She added that the minutes were sent out prior to the meeting and were posted on the BATS website for review.

Mr. Slade then called for a motion to approve the minutes from the CAC meeting held on May 28, 2020. Mr. Farley made a motion to approve the meeting minutes as presented. Mr. Orrel seconded the motion. The motion was passed unanimously.

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

Ms. Forbes spoke on this agenda item. She stated that BATS staff received a request from GDOT's Planning Office in June 2020 to carry out an amendment to the BATS FY 2018-2021 TIP. She explained the amendment, adding that it is an additional project added to the TIP. The Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) project extends from the Florida state line to the South Carolina state line, and 16.88 miles of that project lies within the BATS MPO region. She stated that the amendment brings in the PE phase into the fiscal year 2021, and the updated table and a new project sheet was added to the TIP to reflect those changes. Additional information is located on the BATS website.

Mrs. Hatcher provided an explanation for what ITS is. She stated that the project is introducing broadband, smart technology into the roadways that allows for delays and crashes to be transmitted in real time. Modifications can then be made, like signal timing, and can be adjusted in real time. She added that this technology is just the first wave of ITS and is preparing the roadways for autonomous vehicles.

Ms. Forbes stated that the suggested motion is to recommend to the Policy Committee to release the amendment to the public for a 30-day public comment period. She added that after the public comment period closes, the TIP amendment will be brought before the CAC before the PC signs the resolution for this amendment, per GDOT's request.

Mr. Slade called for a motion for the CAC to recommend to the Policy Committee approve the BATS FY 2018 -2021 TIP Amendment per GDOT's request and release for a 30-day public comment period. Mr. Gilligan made a motion. The motion was seconded by Mrs. Ennis-Roughton. The motion was passed unanimously.

4. 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) Update

Ms. Forbes spoke on this agenda item. She reminded the committee of the timeline for the 2045 MTP update. She stated that the draft report is currently out for a 30-day public comment review period. She added that the comment period opened on July 1, 2020, and will close on July 30, 2020, and copies are available to view on the BATS website. She stated that hard copies are available at the Glynn County Community Development Department, both library branches in Brunswick and St. Simons Island, and the Brunswick City Hall.

Mr. Slade asked if there were any comments received since July 1, 2020.

Ms. Forbes responded that there were no comments received from the public, but feedback was received from oversight agencies and that information was provided to the consultant team.

Mr. Slade asked if the draft report was available for public comment and was there publicity for the draft report.

Ms. Forbes stated that information was published in the local newspaper, in neighborhood groups via Facebook and on the BATS website with a newsflash that is running through the end of July 2020. She added that the fourth round of public meetings has started on July 13, 2020 and is available virtually through the end of the July 2020. She explained how to access the public meeting and how the webpage functions. She encouraged committee members to visit and tour the website and to encourage their peers and community members to do so as well.

Mrs. Hatcher added that there are 35 participants in the virtual meeting thus far. She stated that the virtual public meeting has been open for only several hours and that it is getting a lot of traction. She stated BATS staff will keep the CAC informed with any comments from the public meeting.

Ms. Forbes stated that she would distribute a link to committee members to forward to their contacts. She stated that next steps include addressing the comments and feedback received during the public comment period and adoption of the BATS 2045 MTP on August 10, 2020.

5. BATS Administrative Updates

a. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Ms. Forbes provided the committee with the administrative updates. She gave a brief review of the FY 2020 UPWP before introducing the current fiscal year UPWP. She stated that the fiscal year 2020 ended on June 30, 2020, and BATS staff is currently finalizing and closing out of that contract to submit all documentation to GDOT for review. She added once that process is completed, BATS staff will provide the MPO and committees with the final annual report of all FY 2020 activities. She briefly went over the highlights from fiscal year 2020, including

- 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 Improvements Study – Awarded
- Updated Public Participation Plan (PPP), previously updated in 2015
- Updated Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), last updated in June 1995
- BATS staff maintained consistent coordination and collaboration with FHWA and GDOT partners during development of all planning documents
- BATS successfully carried out comprehensive, cooperative, continuous (3-C) planning process with the development of the annual work program.

Ms. Forbes stated that the current fiscal year began on July 1, 2020. She then explained the planning priorities for the 2021 fiscal year:

- Supporting the public review and adoption of the BATS 2045 MTP
- Monitoring and completing all special PL funding projects awarded to the MPO in the previous fiscal year
- Supporting the 2020 U.S. Census count and all related activities within the MPO area
- Maintenance of administrative documents and standard operating procedures for the BATS MPO
- Update of the current FY 2018-21 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Special Project Development: Bay Street Corridors Improvement Study
- 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 Reports.

Ms. Forbes explained the FY 2022 UPWP Schedule of Activities and how the BATS MPO was following the Federal 3C Process (Continuous, Cooperative, Comprehensive). She stated that once the draft UPWP is ready in October 2020, it will be presented to the BATS Committees for review and comment before the adoption date of July 30, 2021.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that for the upcoming fiscal year, BATS staff is open to input on other areas of the MPO planning process unlike the previous fiscal year, where the focus was the 2045 MTP Update. She added that this is a good year to focus on those areas, and that in 2023, the MTP planning process begins again. She stated that a comment form will be emailed to committee members that includes areas of emphasis and a framework for the BATS MPO to demonstrate to FHWA where the funding is going.

Ms. Forbes stated that BATS staff is going to distribute a planning priority form for the committee to circulate and provide input to be incorporated into the draft FY 2022 UPWP.

b. GAMPO Special PL funding Application

Ms. Forbes spoke on this agenda item. She reminded the committee of the GAMPO PL funding process, and how it occurs twice a year in the fall and in the spring. She stated that funding from GAMPO was how BATS received funding for the Lanier Gloucester project and for the St. Simons

Island Sector Study portion of the 2045 MTP. She added that the next GAMPO meeting will be held in September 2020. She stated that in the last round of proposals, the MLK Altama Bike Route study was not moved forward because the Lanier Gloucester project was underway, and the Bay St. Corridor Project that was awarded. She added that any ideas for projects that committee members may want to submit, to start thinking about that. She stated that projects that are not scope ready will have to be pushed to Spring 2021. These projects require a 20% local sponsor match. She briefly explained the project screening for the MLK – Altama Bike Route project. Ms. Forbes highlighted the GAMPO/Special PL funding timeline.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that because there will be special called meetings held in August 2020, it gives the committees one more opportunity to move a project forward if there's a local sponsor that's ready to fund the project and the Policy Committee sees fit to do so. She added that if projects cannot be moved forward, there will be an opportunity in Spring 2021. continued with the updates on this agenda item, sharing with the committee the various types of projects eligible for this program, including streetscape improvements and Safe Routes to School Program.

c. 5303 Transit Planning Grant Application (FY 2022)

Ms. Forbes briefly spoke on this agenda item. She stated that this grant application is what is used to support planning activities for the MPO throughout the year, and the application usually opens around September. She briefly explained the line items for 5303 activities, the typical timeline for the funding application, and the FTA 5303 estimates for FY 2022.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that 5303 planning activities are also a part of the UPWP, which is primarily transit as well as accessibility to transit planning. She mentioned that there are federal requirements for these funds, and that there must be MPO meetings and follow the 3C planning process. She stated that the BATS MPO can also apply for supplemental funds in the fiscal year 2022 as long as there is a local financial sponsorship. She added that this would be for the next fiscal year, beginning July 1, 2021.

6. Agency Updates

Ms. Forbes provided the committee with a brief overview of the agency updates provided during the TCC meeting.

a. Glynn County Airport Commission

She stated that Mr. Bessing provided updates on Airport projects during the TCC meeting. She stated that according to the updates, the airport has two flights a day currently, and with social distancing protocols in place, flights can have up to 30 passengers still. She stated that Mr. Bessing mentioned that for passengers who do not have masks, there are masks provided to them. The parking lot is gearing towards expansion with an application for Glynn County due Thursday. She added that business is picking up since the slow down during the previous month.

b. Update on School Board Projects

There were no Glynn County School Board updates presented at the previous TCC meeting.

c. Glynn County

She told the CAC that a county project sheet was provided to the committee and available on the BATS website. She stated construction work on the Demere & East Beach project has been idle for the past two weeks due to the Fourth of July holiday traffic. She added that work has begun again as of this week and the project should be wrapping up within six to eight weeks. Design is due to move forward on the project at Federica and Kings Way, and the right of way is still in the works for the Altama Connector project.

d. Update on City Projects

There were no City project updates presented during the TCC meeting.

e. Update on GDOT Projects

Ms. Forbes told the committee that a GDOT project list that will be placed on the BATS website and Mr. Cowart provided a detailed update on each of those projects. She stated that if the committee members had any questions, BATS staff will forward them to him and will get his response to those questions.

f. Jekyll Island Authority

Ms. Forbes stated that Mr. Jensen provided updates for Jekyll Island Authority. Riverview and Beachview were restriped due to funding from GDOT and that all the major thoroughfares on the island were restriped before the summer traffic began. She stated that the Fuel Farm at the Jekyll Island Airport is now selling fuel and has sold over 1,200 gallons of fuel in May 2020. She added that there are upcoming projects, including a parking pavement project that will be paid for through SPLOST funding. shared the CAC that there were no Jekyll Island updates presented at this at the TCC meeting.

g. Transit Agencies

Mrs. Forbes shared with the committee that there were no transit updates provided.

7. Public Comment

Mr. Gilligan asked for updates regarding the public transit grant.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that the Brunswick City Manager was unable to attend the CAC Meeting and provide updates. She added that BATS staff has not heard any substantive new information besides their successful 5307 Operating and Capital Grant application for the past fiscal year, and that this means that they have two years of operating and capital funding that they have access to. She explained that there was an RFQ published four months ago that was coupled with an engineering RFQ that called for planning support moving towards implementation for the transit system. She stated that a firm was chosen for those services, but is not sure which firm has been selected. She added that BATS staff will work towards getting an update and will email that to the CAC members if there is new information available.

Mr. Gilligan asked if it was possible to ask the city to send a representative to the CAC for live updates and to be present for questions from committee members.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that since consultant support was solicited, there will hopefully someone who is more accessible to give updates. She added that there will be an update given at the August special called meeting on August 10, 2020. She stated that a communications topic for today's meeting was about special guests, and if any committee members have any ideas about individuals they would like to give a 15-20 minute presentation, to let BATS staff know and staff will reach out to those individuals.

Mr. Slade provided some comments from the Coastal Regional Commission (CRC). He stated that the CRC has completed a draft of the update of the bike presentation plan for Coastal Georgia that will be presented before the board of the CRC at their August 2020 meeting. He asked if there was any preview or access provided to BATS staff.

Mrs. Hatcher stated that she received a copy from GDOT but it was not ready for public consumption as it was an early draft version to make sure it was consistent with the BATS 2045 MTP.

Mr. Slade stated that it would be good information for BATS MPO to consider in the fall. He then explained an article about the Rails to Trails project that he was involved in. He offered a correction to a river crossing presented in the article, stating that the current plan is to cross Darien River on a newly constructed bridge instead of crossing Altama River in the Altama Regional Park. He added that the Georgia Conservancy has a conceptual plan for a trail that would follow alongside Highway 17, ultimately to the Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation historic site.

Mr. Slade provided more information regarding the East Coast Greenway and stated that therefore the BATS MPO should move forward with the MLK – Altama Bike Study and the need for some projects to be shovel ready. He added that ultimately this is to discuss the idea of connecting Darien to Brunswick.

8. Adjourn

Ms. Forbes reminded the committee of the upcoming special called CAC meeting on August 10, 2020 to recommend adoption of the final draft of the MTP document. She added that the next regularly scheduled meeting will be held on September 14, 2020.

Mr. Gilligan asked for information regarding the time for the upcoming CAC meeting.

Ms. Forbes responded that the special called CAC meeting will be held earlier in the day around 11:30 am, and the September 14 CAC meeting will be at 4:00 p.m.

Mr. Slade asked if there any questions or comments. There were no additional questions or comments from committee members.

Mr. Orrel made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Gilligan seconded that motion. The meeting was adjourned unanimously.

Mr. Slade thanked everyone for their participation and the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:30 PM.

BATS CAC Chairman

Date