
BATS MEETING MINUTES

Brunswick Area Transportation Study Policy Committee (PC) Meeting

Monday, June 13, 2022 – 1:30 p.m.

Via Teleconference

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks (Julie Martin)
2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Action Item
 - a. Minutes from PC meeting held on April 11, 2022
3. BATS FY 2021-2024 TIP Amendments – Action Item
4. Special PL Funding Project (MLK-Altama Bicycle Corridor Study) – Action Item
5. BATS Administrative Updates
 - a. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program
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

Brunswick Area Transportation Study
Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Monday, June 13, 2022 – 1:30 p.m.
Via Teleconference

ATTENDEES

Committee Members

Julie Martin, City of Brunswick
Robert Burr, Glynn County Airport Commission
Thomas Caiafa, GDOT Office of Planning (Proxy for Radney Simpson)
Cassius Edwards, GDOT District 5
James Gilligan, CAC Chair
C. Jones Hooks, Jekyll Island Authority
Cosby Johnson, City of Brunswick
Olivia Lewis, Federal Highway Administration
Regina McDuffie, City of Brunswick
Ralph Staffins, Brunswick/Golden Isles Chamber of Commerce

Others

Vishanya Forbes, Transportation Planner, RS&H
Garrow Alberson, City of Brunswick
David Schmidt, Pond & Co.
Melissa Phillips, Pond & Co.
Robert Caudill, GDOT Office of Planning
Katie Proctor, GDOT District 5
Maurice Postal, Glynn County Community Development

1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

The meeting was called to order at approximately 1:30 p.m. by Commissioner Julie Martin, Vice-Chair of the BATS Policy Committee.

2. Approval of Meeting Minutes – Action Item

a. Minutes from TCC meeting held on April 11, 2022

Ms. Martin called for a motion to approve the minutes from the PC meeting held on April 11, 2022. Mr. Caiafa made a motion to approve the meeting minutes and Mr. Hooks seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

3. BATS FY 2021-2024 TIP Amendment – Action Item

Ms. Forbes presented this agenda item. She reminded the committee that BATS received requests from GDOT in February and March 2022 to perform amendment to the BATS FY 2021-2024 TIP document. The first TIP amendment request was to update funding sources for the SR 32 widening project, increasing the funding from \$380,000 to \$500,000. This amendment was released for a 30-day public comment period and advertisements were placed on the MPO website, and in the Brunswick News. The comment period ended on May 11, 2022. No comments were received from the public. The second TIP amendment request was to incorporate funding from the carbon reduction release under the new BIL/IIJA. She stated that both the CAC and TCC took action to recommend approval following the closing of the 30-day public comment period.

Ms. Martin asked if the TIP amendments have created any delays in moving the projects forward. Ms. Forbes responded that this process has not led to delays, and she explained that the purpose of the amendments was to ensure that they would be included in the TIP before the end of the fiscal year ending on June 30, 2022.

Ms. Martin called for a motion for the BATS PC to approve the FY 2021-2024 TIP amendments #3 and #4. Mr. Hooks made a motion to move the amendments forward and Mr. Caiafa seconded the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

4. Special PL Funding Project (MLK-Altama Bicycle Corridor Study) – Action Item

Ms. Forbes provided open remarks on this agenda item. She stated that the MLK-Altama Bicycle Corridor project was brought forward by the City of Brunswick and led by Mr. Alberson as the project manager. She added that the consulting team from Pond & Company will be presenting their findings and following which the PC will be asked to take action on..

Mr. Schmidt welcomed the PC and thanked Ms. Martin for her attendance at all of their previous presentations and for the insight that she has provided. Mr. Schmidt stated that the consultant team was brought in to identify the best bicycle routes possible for the MLK Jr. Boulevard and

Altama Avenue corridor. He explained that this study does not include any construction documents and is a high-level analysis of what can be accomplished in this corridor. He added that the consultant team has been a part of five presentations with public input and met with the CAC and TCC.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the goal of a separated bike lane is to utilize existing space and provide a separated lane for bicyclists, and potentially pedestrians, to travel from one point to another without the use of their vehicles. He mentioned that there are several different options for how separated bike lanes can be implemented. He described the study area and how the southernmost portion is intended to connect to the existing trail corridor.

Mr. Schmidt presented the planning aspects of the project and discussed the analysis that the consultant team conducted. He stated that the consultant team will provide this report with the final study, and he highlighted that the team did not find any adverse effects through their analysis. He added that the consultant team collected and utilized traffic counts for bicyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles on the corridor. He explained that the team observed bicyclists using the existing shoulder and concluded that peak hours saw approximately 150 individuals. Based on this level of traffic, the consultant team recommends a 10-foot-wide path so that people have enough space to pass each other and feel both safe and comfortable. He mentioned that there are some places where the roadway cannot accommodate 10-foot trail and in these locations the team recommends a minimum preferred width of 8-feet. He showed typical sections of separated bike lanes and explained the pros and cons of different types of bike lanes.

Mr. Schmidt discussed Option #1 for the corridor and stated that the report presents the plan from north to south, with north oriented on the left side of the page. This option proposes a trail that continues along the west side of Altama Avenue within the right-of-way. In the northern portion of the trail, the proposed bike lane is 10-feet wide and can be separated with plants, concrete, or striping and bollards. He emphasized that this option uses the existing shoulder and makes improvements within it. The existing sidewalk on the east side of the road will remain and on the western side of the road, the proposed trail will be utilized by cyclists and pedestrians alike.

Mr. Schmidt stated that traffic counts were collected when students were in session after their Spring Break and that there are two elementary schools, a high school, and a college along the corridor. He explained that the shoulder in front of Altama Elementary School is often used for staging and some parents arrive there an hour before school ends to pick up their children. He added that this area will require further consideration and may involve discussions with the school.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the first instance where there is not enough room for a buffer occurs at the Altama Connector intersection and this is due to the turning movements. In this location,

the trail must go outside of the right-of-way, and he emphasized that this is only one of a couple areas where this must happen. He explained that the proposal utilizes the existing crosswalks, and he suggests signal modifications and signage to accommodate cyclists as they move through intersections along the corridor. He stated that the consultant team intends for this to be a very safe corridor.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the more urban area of the corridor occurs near Altama Village Shopping Center and Glynn Isles. In this area, the proposed trail remains on the west side of Altama Avenue because it is difficult to fit anything on the east side of the road due to the many turning movements. He explained that there are few places where the proposed trail must be a raised bike lane due to space limitations.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the consultant team observed many students running across the street near Brunswick High School, specifically during lunchtime. Based on this observation, the proposed trail includes a mid-block crossing with a raised table and flashing beacons which also doubles as traffic calming infrastructure. This would allow students to cross safely without needing to run across the street or walk down to Emory Dawson Parkway. He explained that the trail would be on both the east and west side of Altama Avenue in this area and it would provide a key connection to the Coastal College of Georgia. In front of the college, the right-of-way is farther from the road and there is enough space to provide additional separation from the road. He explained that the consultant team has been asked if they have been involved in coordination with the Coastal College of Georgia. Representatives have been present at previous meetings, but the consultant team would like to continue to partner with them to hear their input on the plan. He stated that the college has completed a trail study in the same area and the consultant team would like to combine the two designs to ensure that it is implemented properly.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the proposed trail runs along the east side of Altama Avenue after it passes the Coastal College of Georgia. He stated that additional signalization will be needed at the train crossing near the intersection of Parkwood Drive and Altama Avenue.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the trail would cross the east side of the street and move into the median near the bend from Altama Avenue to MLK Jr. Boulevard. The trail along the east side would have a diagonal crossing to move cyclists and pedestrians into the median. He stated that the central median is a great resource because it functions like a linear park and the consultant team has observed people already using this area for recreation. He explained that the right-of-way is narrow in this area and many residential properties utilize it for parking. He stated that diagonal crossings would be best and should be signalized with flashing lights. He explained that the trail in the median could have a curving pattern. Without a survey, the consultant team was not able to complete a detailed design, but they utilized aerials in GIS to avoid major trees. He explained that the team learned in the last committee meeting that the local utility company

intends to remove many of the trees in the median because they may have future impacts with utilities. He stated that there are appropriate trees within the regulations that could be planted to provide landscaping. He stated that the study area ends at Prince Street near the water tower, and the trail would connect to the existing trail.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the report includes examples of what traffic signals along the trail may look like. He stated that there will need to be upgrades and modifications to crossings, such as stopbars, flashing beacons, striping, and signage. He stated that there are existing poles at many intersections that can be modified to include additional signals.

Mr. Schmidt presented Option #2 for the corridor, which proposes the addition of a trail along both the west and east side of Altama Avenue. He stated that there would be a mid-block crossing in front of Altama Elementary School, where this consultant team observed many children crossing the street where there is currently no crossing. This would be intended to serve the residences that are across Altama Avenue from the elementary school.

Mr. Schmidt highlighted the area farther south near Glynn Isle and Altama Village Shopping Center which does not have enough room for a 10-foot-wide trail and separated buffer on the east side of the road. He noted that the trail falls outside the right-of-way on the east side of the road in this location. He explained that Option #2 utilizes the same concept as Option #1 once Altama Avenue turns into MLK Jr. Boulevard, where the trail converges from both sides of the road into the median. He emphasized that the area where the trail moves into the median is one of the most favorable areas throughout the entire corridor.

Mr. Schmidt explained that Chapter 4 of the report presents intersections and is intended to educate the public about how they work. The consultant team chose to highlight the intersection of G Street and MLK Jr. Boulevard because they observed a high level of activity there and found in the data that there are a lot of turning movements at this intersection. There is an existing signal at this intersection, but it will need to be retrofitted to signalize for bicycle traffic and the timing will need to be redone to promote the movement of pedestrians and cyclists first and then vehicles after.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the consultant team has explored pricing and looked into linear foot cost based on curbs, landscaping, materials, painting, bollards, and signalization. Based on market conditions, the team found that it will cost \$1.5 million per mile for this trail corridor to be constructed and implemented.

Mr. Schmidt opened the discussion for further questions. Ms. McDuffie asked if the estimate of \$1.5 million per mile was based on Option #1 or Option #2. Mr. Schmidt explained that this cost estimate is based on a typical section for a street level separated bike line with painting and bollards. Ms. McDuffie asked if this cost estimate included landscaping and Mr. Schmidt stated

that the cost estimate does include landscaping. He explained that the cost estimate could be refined with more specific data as the project moves forward. Currently, the high-level estimate includes trees, palms, and general greenspace.

Ms. Martin asked how many times and where the bike trail crosses over from one side of the road to the other. Mr. Schmidt explained that the trail utilized mid-block crossings near Altama Elementary School, Brunswick High School, and when it moves into the median near O Street for Option #2. He explained that the trail could be painted and spruced up to ensure that the crossings are clear. Ms. Martin stated that crossings between the high school and college are very important because many students have dual enrollment, and it would be important moving forward to have a conversation with both the high school and college to determine what the timing and traffic patterns of students may look like.

Ms. McDuffie asked about the right-of-way acquisitions that may be needed at the southern end of the study area. Mr. Schmidt stated that no acquisitions will be needed past O Street because the trail travels through the median. He explained that the main areas where acquisitions will need to take place occur in the more urban areas, such as Altama Village Shopping Center and Glynn Isle, where the many turning movements make the corridor narrower.

Ms. Martin asked if the crossing near the railroad would need to involve significant conversations with CSX and Norfolk Southern. Mr. Schmidt explained that there will need to be discussions and involvement from both the DOT and CSX, and he confirmed that this is an active railroad.

Mr. Schmidt explained that the CAC asked in their previous meeting for the report to include typical sections for bus drop-offs, so the consultant team is working to include examples to show how the trail will be incorporated with bus traffic. He stated that team will share the final report once final edits are made in the next few weeks and this will conclude their portion of the study. Next steps for the project would be to try to get the plan into funding vehicles and apply to grants to make the project possible.

Ms. Martin asked if Mr. Schmidt had any examples of communities that have been successful in partnering with the private sector to help make the project possible and fund amenities along the trail. Mr. Schmidt stated that he would reach out to his team and would share examples. He explained that he has been involved in projects where public involvement has helped to get people excited about the trail and private groups have then stepped in to provide support.

Ms. Martin thanked Mr. Schmidt and his team for their work on the project and highlighted that it became clear that the consultant team looked for the best and safest routes to get from point A to point B. He added that his team is willing to answer any further questions via email.

Ms. Martin entertained a motion to recommend that the BATS PC endorse the final draft of the MLK-Altama Bicycle Corridor Study incorporating any suggested changes. Ms. McDuffie made a motion and Mr. Hooks seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

5. BATS Administrative Updates

a. Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant Program

Ms. Forbes provided the committee with administrative updates. She stated that the Safe Streets and Roads for All discretionary grant program was released following the previous PC meeting and is part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. This program is intended to help local areas prevent transportation related deaths or serious injuries on roadways. The program is funded at approximately \$1 billion and will be spread out between fiscal years 2022 and 2026. USDOT held a series of webinars pertaining to the grant application. The MPO, city, and county are all eligible to apply, but USDOT favors joint applications. There are two separate types of grants, including an Action Plan Grant for Safety Action Plans and an Implementation Grant.

Ms. Forbes explained that applicants must have Safety Action Plans in place in order to apply for an Implementation Plan, and because BATS does not currently have a Safety Action Plan, they must apply for the Action Plan Grant first. She stated that the grant requires a 20% local match, and the minimum award is \$200,000, so BATS would have to provide at least \$40,000 to apply for this grant.

Ms. Forbes stated that the SS4A application opened on May 16, 2022, and it is scheduled to close on September 15, 2022. She explained that applications are required to go through two cycles of MPO meetings and given this timeline BATS staff does not believe that they will be able to meet the September submittal deadline, but it will be on their radar for the next cycle.

Ms. McDuffie asked if BATS had a plan to review the grant program application in the next cycle. Ms. Forbes stated that BATS staff will add it to GAMPO updates because this would be another potential funding source to complete the Safety Action Plan. She explained that BATS does not have to use SS4A funding to complete the Safety Action Plan and BATS staff will plan to begin the process with enough time for two MPO meeting review cycles.

Ms. Martin asked for clarification about the 20% local matching funds and whether it could include funding from both the city and county. Ms. Forbes responded that a joint application would require a 10% from both the city and the county.

b. Return to In-Person MPO Meetings

Ms. Forbes reminded PC members that the regularly scheduled MPO meetings will change to a hybrid format in July 2022. Local participants may attend in person at the Pate Building and

participants who wish to attend virtually will also have that option to do so through the Microsoft Teams teleconference link.

6. Agency Updates

a. Glynn County Airport Commission

Mr. Burr stated that all projects have been moving along and the Glynn County Airport Commission is trying to get funding for a new project called Skylight Infrastructure at St. Simons Island Airport. They have seen a very strong demand for additional facilities, and especially for private hangars. There was an existing plan that will need to be updated due to the strong demand for private development on the St. Simons Island Airport.

b. Glynn County School Board

Ms. Forbes stated that there is no representative from the Glynn County School Board present and that Mr. Simmons served his last term so there will be a new committee member coming on board.

c. Glynn County

Ms. Forbes stated that the project sheet was made available to BATS and is shared on the MPO website. She added that if anyone has questions on the projects, they could email her for a response.

d. City of Brunswick

Mr. Alberson provided updates on City of Brunswick projects.

- The south end of the trail between MLK Jr. Boulevard and Highway 17 on 4th Avenue has been completed.
- The concept reports and preliminary design are in progress for the boardwalk trail between Overlook Park and the Causeway.
- The Magnolia Park project is moving forward and is scheduled for a late August or early September completion.

e. GDOT District 5

Ms. Proctor provided status updates on preconstruction projects for GDOT District 5.

- SR 25 Spur East @ Mackay River bridge replacement continues toward PFPR. The PCRf is still in revision and is anticipated in October.
- The widening of SR 25 CR 415 from Harry Driggers to SR 99 (Phase II) is awaiting the amendment for construction to be completed and then an let-to-construction date will be set.

- The concept report is being developed for CR 583/ Sea Island Road @ Dunbar Creek on St. Simons Island bridge replacement.
- SR 32 @ Little Buffalo Creek bridge replacement continues toward the concept team meeting and is now scheduled for July 2022.
- The roundabout on SR 25 @ SR 99 is on schedule for final plan submission and let-to-construction in August 2022.

Ms. Proctor provided status updates on active projects for GDOT District 5.

- GDOT is working with East Coast Asphalt to complete the revisions to the contract for the resurfacing of Gloucester from SR 27 to SR 25. There is no start date to report.
- The resurfacing on SR 25 from east of SR 303 extending south of Sidney Lanier Bridge is reporting at 86% complete and the team is pursuing corrective work and thermoplastic insulation.
- The bridge rehab on SR 27/US 341 over Yellow Bluff and Burnett Creek is reporting at 17% complete.
- The notice to proceed was issued in May 2020 for the widening and reconstruction on SR 25 from Yacht Rd to Harry Driggers Blvd & Bridge over Thornhill Creek and GDOT is awaiting a start date.

Ms. Martin asked if the resurfacing on SR 25 of Gloucester would be completed before school returns to session.

Ms. Proctor stated that she has been meeting with the assistant construction manager for the project every two weeks, but he does not have any updates to report due to the striping revision. She explained that she will report any updates from the assistant construction manager when she receives them.

Committee members engaged in further discussion regarding this project.

There were no additional questions regarding GDOT District 5 project updates.

f. Jekyll Island Authority

Mr. Hooks did not have any updates to present from the Jekyll Island Authority.

g. Transit Agencies

No updates from transit agencies were presented at this meeting.

h. Other Items

No updates on other items were presented or discussed at this meeting.

i. Public Comment

No public comments were provided at this meeting.

7. Adjourn

Ms. Martin reminded everyone of the upcoming meeting scheduled on August 8, 2022. Ms. Forbes reminded the PC members to submit their in-kind sheets via email to her as BATS closes out the fiscal year. She stated that these forms are posted on the MPO website, and she confirmed that they are needed for every meeting. She added that meeting dates for the upcoming meetings are also posted on the MPO website. The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:40 pm.

BATS PC Chair

Date