

## Meeting Minutes

The Greater Dalton Metropolitan Planning Organization Joint Coordinating Committee  
**October 18, 2012– 10:00A.M.**

Whitfield County Administrative Building #1 - 301 West Crawford Street, Dalton, Georgia  
30720

### PC Members Present:

*Mike Babb, Chairman, Whitfield County BOC J.*  
*Tyson Ross, Administrator, City of Dalton*  
*Radney Simpson, Asst. Pl Dir GDOT*  
*Ken Gowin, Mayor, City of Tunnel Hill*  
*Mark Gibson, Administrator, Whitfield County*  
*Jason Hall, Manager, City of Varnell*

### TCC Members Present:

*Kent Benson, Engineer, Whitfield County*

*Benny Dunn, Director, Dalton Public Works*  
*Dave Cox, GDOT Planner*  
*Heath Harrison, W&WW Manager, Dalton Utilities*

*Greg Hood, District 6 Plan/Program Eng., GDOT*  
*Frank Hubbs, Dalton Airport Authority*

*Karen Quarles, Transit PL GDOT (via phone)*  
*Brandon Harrison, Dalton City BOE*

### GDMPO Advisors Present:

GDMPO Staff Present:  
*Susan Paredes, GDMPO Coordinator*

### GUESTS:

*Lamont Kiser*  
*Katherine Fields*  
*Alisha Vaughn*

### PC Members Absent:

*Steve Walker, GDOT*  
*Dick Lowrey City Council*  
TCC Members Absent:

*TBD - . Plnr, FHWA*  
*Brendan Stinson, Shaw Trans. Mgr*  
*Mike Ewton, Whitfield County BOE*

### GDMPO Advisors Absent:

*Jean Price-Garland*  
*Audrey Johnson, Transit Planner, GDOT*  
*Robert Buckley, FTA*  
*Barnett Chitwood, NWGRC, Comm Planner*

Meeting was called to order by Policy Chairman, Ty Ross at 10:02AM.  
Three Guests were present and introduced:

Lamont Kiser - Pending Bartow MPO

Katherine Fields - American Consulting

Alisha Vaughn – new Whitfield County Finance Director.

All were welcomed and a brief explanation was provided the MPO function and funding sources.

Cartersville anticipates becoming an MPO in 2013, triggered by the 2010 census.

### **GDOT Project Update:**

Greg Hood, District Engineer, provided a brief project status summary for Whitfield and Greater Dalton. He noted no significant changes occurred in past month.

- Rocky Face - January 2013 Let date still in place.
- Bridge at Swamp Creek is approved for 2014
- Tunnel Hill has two lump sum projects
- Roundabout at 201 Southbound has May 2015 ROW date and management Let date - May 2016.
- Safe Routes to School – sidewalk projects for 2013 are active projects.

At which time the GDOT update was concluded.

### **Discussion Items:**

The Roundabout at I75 and 52 was discussed in more detail. ROW was scheduled 2015 – but the MPO staff expressed concern about the chronic delays. DOT requested an IMR, but then quashed its request. Instead GDOT required a VISSIM report - currently underway by American Consulting; it is in submittal / approval process. Katherine Fields with American Consulting was asked to report on the length of time for that process.

GDOT District Engineer, Mike Haithcock explained the dates are a reference for internal GDOT and until the Concept is completed new dates will not be uploaded. The concept completion triggers the review of dates. The Project Manager for this project should be installed by late October and by that time; the VISSIM and the concept should be completed. The higher the cost of the project, the longer it takes.

Benny Dunn – Dalton Public Works requested a meeting with the new Project Manager to review current projects and dates. Katherine with AM CONS drew up concept and design - however FHWA halted plans in the submittal and approval process.

Ty Ross advised the Complete Streets Resolution passed the Board and inquired of GDOT if the MPO needed to take any action. No actions were required.

### **The Administrative Report**

Ms. Paredes updated the committees on the following administrative functions of the MPO:

- Quarter 3 Grant reporting completed
- FY2012 Grants completed and administratively closed out. This allows new funding application.
- GDOT Planning Division is working with the MPO to determine carry-over funding available in FY2013. Because the Governor has not yet signed the budget it is estimated \$90K will be available
- 5303 Transit Planning Grant (31K) contract sent back to GDOT for full execution

- 5307 Transit Capital and Planning (studies) grant (\$80K) to be mailed no later than EOM – October. Dalton City and Dalton State College agreed to contribute to matched funding as follows:

Dalton State College will match \$2,500

City of Dalton will match \$2,500

And the MPO match amount of \$5,000

Ross recommended re-naming the transit studies to “Community Connectivity Studies” – to send a positive message to community. No objections were made and the MPO will take this under advisement. The MPO has completed the feasibility study conducted to move closer to building a fixed route transit program, to benefit the College students downtown Dalton merchants. The college expansion and addition of dormitories, sporting facilities, and student population expected to increase, it is very beneficial the entities are coming together to partner in funding.

FHWA Engaging Stakeholder and Freight Transportation Workshop to be held in Dalton and hosted by the MPO in November 2012 –Members of the MPO committees are encouraged to attend. Comments were made identifying the increased freight potential as the port of savannah widening becomes a reality. Our preparedness for this in Rail, surface and dock impact as well as freight distribution and movement will be regionally and locally significant.

Next updated planning project was the RR Crossing Safety / Closure project. Members of the Technical Coordinating Committee met to discuss the closing of hazardous crossings near the Carbondale area, and the building of a frontage road in cooperation with Norfolk Southern Railroad and GDOT. This would provide two crossings that were safe and accessible to the residents in that area. Up to six (6) crossings could be closed. The funding that was available for this safety project back in February has been delayed due to the delay in approving the transportation budget. GDOT stated they thought this was a project that could be completed in 2015. It is a regionally significant safety project captured in the illustrative list of the LRTP. It is not currently in the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) though slated for 2015 construction. The MPO asked if this would require amending to the current TIP. Should the MPO amend this project to the TIP?

Mike Haithcock stated in summary explanation: projects not identified in the TIP – it *does not “exist”* to GDOT. Karen Quarles GDOT Intermodal division on the phone conferencing, agreed. Haithcock also stated – if no Preliminary Engineering has been done on a project, the project will *not likely* happen. If there is PE and ROW funding on the project it *may* happen. If there is PE, ROW and Construction funding, the project *WILL* happen.

Additionally, a cost estimate of \$6-7 Million project should inspire the question, how the project will be funded.

Lump Sum Safety Money usually covers \$200-300K cost projects (smaller) – because the DOT can get a lot more of these done and spread the funding rather than complete one multimillion dollar project in one County.

Lump Sum funding - Federal funds – should be put in the TIP - but make sure it is paid for.

The MPO noted the FY14 Tip development will commence in spring.

MPO Staff how we get a project in the TIP or on the GDOT funding radar:

Haitchcock recommended setting up a small amount of money for PE – (est.: \$50-100K), and ask GDOT to do a design and concept, cost estimate and include a drawing and a scope. Once the cost estimate comes back, decide how to budget/ pay.

How much ROW is involved is also important from a time and cost schedule. A good rule of thumb is GDOT can purchase 12 ROW parcels in a year. He recommended let GDOT scope the cost.

**GAMPO:** MPO Staff is scheduled to attend the GAMPO meeting in November. Both Susan and Kent will attend.

Lamont Kiser, Cartersville - Bartow County MPO, met with the MPO to review various processes and administrative responsibilities of an MPO. Area boundaries extending into Cobb will require MOU's. They are a non- attainment area and will coordinate many of the compliance issues with the ARC which is already handling that aspect in some of the areas that fall under the ARC. Karen Quarles, GDOT Intermodal, addressed Mr. Kiser, Cartersville, to determine if the Cartersville MPO will cover part of what the ARC currently conducts planning activities. Kiser acknowledged portions of the SE part of Bartow were under the ARC, and he and Susie Dunn were in communication with GDOT. In response to the timing of the MPO formation, Kiser addressed the process that is currently on schedule and will meet MPO requirements – which will allow them to enter an agreement in 2016 (march) to remove that section and establish a stand-alone by FY 2014- 15 and designated by the Governor before then. In 2015-16, the CBMPO will work with the ARC to take over the ARC section. Quarles stated they will be eligible for the 5303 and 5307 grants and noted the current transit system had funding available already. At which time, Paredes concluded the staff report.

Ty Ross, PC Chair - **New Action Items:**

1. Lumping A and B Approving last Meeting Minutes from August Meeting and approval of Today's agenda in one. **Motion made, seconded and carried**
2. Vote to Adopt the TIP Amendment #1 – A retroactive Amendment to update funding on the Rocky Face Project. This is a precautionary measure due to the governor's pending approval of the transportation budget. In the event the funding for FY2013 is not approved, this will be accurate and prevent any delays in dispute of the funding amount allocated for the project – as the 2012 TIP would be the point of reference document. **Motion was made, seconded and carried.**
3. Next, Nominations from the floor to elect officers commenced. After a brief discussion, it was presented to re-elect all incumbents to the same position for the upcoming year. **Motion was made, seconded and carried.**
4. Last Action Item is the approval of the Resolution between Chattanooga TPO /RPA and Whitfield County Greater Dalton MPO regarding boundary smoothing which allows the a very small portion of the GDMPO's planning area which exists in Catoosa County to be absorbed into the Chattanooga Regional Planning since they cover the remainder of Catoosa. **Motion was made, Seconded and carried.**

GDOT Planning staff noted recent 2010 Census data will add to the MPO planning boundary a section in Murray County and the MPO is encouraged to engage them in the MPO and planning processes. The MPO should determine how many will be representing this region and be voting members. MPO is

subject to the Participation Plan and By Laws. The MPO agreed to reach out to the new Commissioner Elect, scheduled to take office in January - to set up a meeting and invite participation.

Public comment period – N/A

With no other business, the meeting was concluded.

**Adjourn:** At which time no other business was noted for discussion and the TCC meeting adjourned.

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J. Tyson Ross, Chairman, GDMPO - Policy Committee

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Mike Babb, Vice-Chair, GDMPO - Policy Committee

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Kent Benson, Chair, GDMPO - Technical Coordinating Committee

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