



Atlanta Regional Commission

Transportation & Air Quality Committee
Charlotte Nash, Chairman

Thursday, September 13, 2018
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.
ARC Harry West Room

Members Present

Commissioner Charlotte Nash, Chair
Commissioner Eric Maxwell
Commissioner Robb Pitts
Commissioner Romona Jackson Jones
Ms. Liane Levetan
Mr. Mark Mathews
Mr. Mike Houchard
Commissioner Oz Nesbitt
Commissioner June Wood
Mr. Paul Tanner
Mr. Eric Dial
Mayor Clark Boddie
Mayor Rochelle Robinson
Ms. Martha Martin
Mr. Rich McDonald
Mr. Tread Davis
Commissioner Buzz Ahrens

Members Absent

Commissioner Marcelo Banes
Commissioner Kevin Little
Commissioner Eric Maxwell
Commissioner Todd Levent
CEO Michael Thurmond
Commissioner Al Smith
Commissioner Mike Boyce
Commissioner Jeff Turner
Commissioner Pat Graham
Mayor Nancy Harris
Commissioner Dave Carmichael
Mayor Keisha Lance Bottoms
Mr. Kerry Armstrong
Mr. Mark Burkhalter
Ms. Donna Sheldon
Mr. Jim Durrett

1. Welcome / Acceptance of the August 9th TAQC Meeting Summary / Public Comment period

Commissioner Charlotte Nash, TAQC Chair, called the meeting to order and asked if there were any comments on the draft 08/9/18 TAQC Meeting summary. One correction was made as to the attendance of Commissioner of Rob Pitts at the August 9 meeting.

2. Local Community Spotlight: Rockdale County Transportation Initiatives

Brian Allen, Director of the Rockdale County Department of Transportation gave a thanks to the participants of the Rockdale County Transportation Summit held two weeks ago in Rockdale County. Attendees at the summit included federal, state and local officials along with ARC Director and staff. The summit focused not only on current projects but relationship building as well.

Mr. Allen provided a video presentation and overview of the transportation initiatives underway in Rockdale county. One of the major projects mentioned is the Courtesy Parkway project, a non-access bridge across I-20. The majority of Rockdale's residential population live south of I-20 but much of the business and industries are north of I-20. The new bridge will help residents and local traffic get from one side to the other. Rockdale was awarded 6.5 million dollars for ROW acquisition for this project which is listed in the TIP. Mr. Allen anticipates the project will be open to traffic prior to the reworking of the SR 138 and I-20 Interchange which is due to start around 2022.

Additionally, Mr. Allen provided information on other key projects. Project phases 3 and 4 of the Sigman/Salem Road widening project is a two-lane road with heavy congestion. The cost for construction will be expensive due the topography and ROW. The state has budgeted funds for the Salem Road widening that will start at I-20 and south into Newton County. Also, the I-20 and SR 138 Interchange reconstruction is also a major project that was originally designed to be a Diverging Diamond Intersection (DDI) will probably now be a single point interchange.

3. Regional Plan Screening Criteria and Policy Framework Updates

David D'Onofrio, ARC, provided an overview of the staff revisions to the framework for each document. In preparation for the next RTP update in 2020, ARC staff are reviewing the policies for any changes and updates that may be needed. D'Onofrio presented a brief description of each document, its major focus and previous work done by the committee and ARC staff.

The first document, the Atlanta Region Plan policy framework is being reviewed to determine if information is missing or if there have been major changes within the last few years as it pertains to new trends or other major regional policies. Currently, ARC staff have not identified any major changes needed, however, any feedback or comments from the committee is still welcomed. Long-term plans consist of pushing major revisions to the next major update in 2024 and in the short-term there will be an effort to tie the policies to the work ARC does more clearly.

D'Onofrio identified three key emerging issues that are now at the forefront of ARC staff thought. One is 21st century technologies, second is affordable housing and third is resilience. While the Policy Framework is still providing a very good umbrella for all the work performed at ARC there are opportunities to improve the wording and language. The committee was asked to provide feedback or recommendations on topics or information to be included in the update.

Lastly, the TIP Project Evaluation (the document that determines how project are being evaluated) recommended changes was presented. The changes are being made for the upcoming project solicitation next year. A description was provided of the three key steps or decision points used to evaluate projects along with an overview of the existing policy filters and the suggested edits. The first general filter change (expected to be in 2019) recommended is a push toward giving new funding in the TIP to communities that have been delivering projects at least a 60% rate over the past three years. The second change projects on the state system will not be considered without a letter of support from GDOT District Office and GDOT Office of Program Delivery. Third, is a few changes in the wording that include safety counter measures in the Complete Street project. Lastly, transit capacity projects must be part of the Concept 3 Transit Vision plan and the ATL transit plan.

4. Social Equity Team Work Activities Update

Aileen Daney, ARC, presented an update on the processes used to identify and assess transportation within disadvantaged communities in the region. The original analysis of the data was in 2012. Now, in 2018, ARC staff need to refresh using the current ACS data. Also, this new analysis will help staff better understand where the protected classes live in our region that will ultimately help in serving these populations.

The new model will look at the protected class which goes beyond race, ethnicity and poverty but rather incorporates national origin, LEP, people with disability older adults, youths and females. Also, the new analysis will move away from the index methodology to the standard deviation methodology (a best practice).

It was recommended by Chairman Nash that the data be made available to the committee because it would be difficult for the committee to make recommendations without having the ability to first try out the data version. It was also recommended by John Orr, that ARC staff investigate doing smaller analyses at the city and county levels and do multi-variable analysis to accommodate access for the committee members.

5. Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Discussion

John Orr, ARC, provided an overview of the purpose and significance of the UPWP. Orr highlighted major items ARC is currently working on for 2019, which he stated will be one of the busiest years. One of the items includes the Region Plan update (which involves a lot of technical work), key certifications and the ATL that will be starting next year. Additionally, communities will be engaged in updating their plans, and there will be two referendums that are scheduled to take place.

To inform ARC's decision for the TIP Solicitation, ARC will be updating its Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Evaluation tool which had not been updated in five years.

In terms of surveys and technical work, a 1.7-million-dollar transit onboard survey will be done that will start next winter. This survey is very critical because it is likely funds will be needed for transit expansion projects. An update to the Region Travel Demand Model will also be needed.

Additionally, Orr presented that the Regional Land Use Model that forecast growth for the region will be reviewed. Finally, the Regional Human Services Transportation Paratransit Brokerage Study that looks at how cost-effective transportation get people to and from doctor appointments. This may be one of ARC's major special study next year. The LCI program is at its 20-year anniversary. ARC will recommend a continuation of this program. Next steps will be underway for this program.

6. Other and Committee Introduces Topics

Chairman Nash mentioned that the House Transit Committee will be looking at the rural areas and transit issues as it pertains to individuals on Medicare.

7. Announcements.

Priority projects or initiatives for the next calendar year need to be sent to Haley Berry by September 21st.

Adjourned.