ARC COMMITTEE MEETING FOLLOW-UP

Transportation & Air Quality Committee (TAQC)
Tom Worthan, Chair

January 14, 2016 Meeting Notes

**Members Present:**
Commissioner Tom Worthan, Chair
Commissioner Charlotte Nash, Vice Chair
Commissioner Buzz Ahrens
Mayor Clark Boddie
Mayor Eric Clarkson
Mayor Nancy Harris
Mr. Mike Houchard
Commissioner Tim Lee
Ms. Martha Martin
Mr. Mark Mathews
Executive Officer Lee May
Rich McDonald, Georgia EPD
Commissioner Charles Oddo
Commissioner Richard Oden
Commissioner Jeff Turner

**Members Absent:**
Commissioner Pete Amos
Mr. Kerry Armstrong, ARC Chair
Mr. Robert Ashe
Commissioner David Austin
Commissioner Bob Blackburn
Mr. Rudy Bowen
Mr. Fred Daniels
Mr. Tread Davis
Commissioner John Eaves
Commissioner Keith Ellis
Commissioner Pat Graham
Commissioner Don Hawbaker
Mr. Tim Lassetter
Ms. Liane Levetan
Commissioner Kevin Little
Commissioner Tommy Smith

**Actions Taken:** None
1. Welcome, Public comment period

Commissioner Tom Worthan, Chair, called the meeting to order. He noted that the meeting summary from 10.02.2015 had been previously distributed and no comments were received. He asked if there were any comments or questions and hearing none, stated the meeting summary was accepted as previously distributed.

Commissioner Tom Worthan, Chair, welcomed new mayor of Douglasville; Mayor Rochelle Robinson.

There were was one written public comments.

2. Convene a Public Hearing for the Purpose of Receiving

Chairman Worthan announced the Atlanta Regional Commission hereby gives notice that a Public Hearing for public comment is on today’s agenda to consider the RTP component to the Atlanta Region’s Plan for adoption by the ARC Board in February. Mayor Boddie made a motion to open the public hearing for the RTP and it was seconded by Chairman Nash. The motion passed. Those wishing to comment were given the opportunity to sign up outside the Board room prior to the 10:30am meeting and be heard relative thereto. There were no petitioners for public comment. The Public Comment Period will end January 15th. Chairman Worthan adjourned the Public Hearing.

3. The Atlanta Region’s Plan / RTP Update

John Orr presented on the Atlanta Region’s Plan/RTP, noting that the ARC Board will be asked to take action on February to adopt the plan. Highlights presented included robust community interaction- 25,000 plus people engaged in the process; the plan is based on the vision and policies developed and adopted by the ARC Board; and total cost to implement the plan is $86 billion – 65% of which is for maintenance and state of good repair.

There will likely be an amendment to the TIP in August to better reflect recent funding changes from the state and federal level.

Orr discussed how the RTP works off of the Policy Framework. The Healthy Livable Communities goals are supported through the continuation of the LCI program, promoting transit oriented development, and the Walk. Bike. Thrive! Plan (bike and pedestrian plan). The Competitive Economy goals are supported by incorporating the concept of emerging centers, Aerotropolis, and freight clusters. World Class Infrastructure goals are supported by linking water issues with community development, highlighting access to job centers, the managed lanes system, and interchange and bottleneck relief projects. All of which are projected to improve transit ridership, access to centers, increase speeds on the interstates, and increase money and fuel savings.

David Haynes presented on the outcomes of the recent Governor’s press conference, announcing a 10-year transportation plan as part of the Transportation Funding Act of 2015. There are 2
tracks of projects, the first will be those that are coming up in the next 18 months. Most of these projects will be bridges, widenings, and repair projects. Also, LMIG will be increased by 20-30%. The second track is a 10 year vision for new projects. The funding is to be determined.

Discussion was held on when LMIG will increase to 50% as noted in the Transportation Bill. Orr responded that the current 20 – 30% increase is based on income for this year. The percentages will increase over time. Chairman Worthan commented that resurfacing is currently a priority.

Discussion was held on whether Macon to Savannah truck lanes were evaluated. The main investment to address freight from/to Savannah will be closer to Savannah, including fixing the interchange at I-95 and I-16. Discussion was held on the fact that I-16 already experiences a large amount of freight movement currently and how we should prepare for increased freight to be expected with the port expansion. Orr responded that I-16 near Savannah is looking at adding general capacity.

4. Atlanta Regional Bike and Pedestrian Plan Recommendations
Byron Rushing presented on the plan, noting that the plan centered on addressing two questions: (1) how do we capitalize on the region’s success; and (2) how do we address the region’s challenges? The plan is broken into 3 components: Recommendations, Assessment of Regional Travel Patterns and Existing Conditions, and Public Input Report. All three components are available at http://atlantaregional.com/transportation/bicycle--pedestrian.

Rushing highlighted the public input process, such as formal meetings and the intercept surveys through-out the region. Various perspectives were captured throughout the region.

The recommendations in the plan are organized by regional and local emphasis. This approach allows for better evaluation of what areas are best suited for investment for federal dollars vs local dollars.

5. Overview of the FAST Act
John Orr provided an overview of the FAST Act (Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act) and how it will impact the region. It is a 5 year authorization bill that includes $305 billion for highways and transit programs. This is the first multi-year transportation authorization since 2005.

Georgia will see about a 14.7% increase through 2020. Important to note, highway funds in FY15 and FY16 increase by 4-5% and will see continued growth through FY2020 but at a lesser rate. FTA funds will also be increasing over time, which will be a change for the region.

The National Highway Performance Program will receive most of the funding. The Surface Transportation Block Grant Program, previously STP-Urban funds, will increase over the life of the bill, as well as safety and CMAQ funding. $206 million was allotted for National Freight Program, which is a new program. The TAP program was frozen at existed funding levels.
The Nationally Significant Freight & Highway Projects Program will be administered through an application process for freight related projects of national significance. $4.5 billion has been allotted over 5 years in this program. Applicants can be states, MPOs, combo of states, etc.

Transit will have a 20% increase in New Starts in 2016 then flat through 2020. The federal match has been decreased from 80% to 60% which is in step with what has been happening in practice. Buses and bus facilities program funding increases by 62.5%.

There was continued emphasis on project delivery and environmental streamlining. ARC is ahead of the curve here. One such provision allows states to substitute their environmental laws for NEPA. Georgia DOT is looking at what this would mean for the state.

Discussion was had on project delivery and whether switching would improve or slow down the process? Orr responded that it would help with cost and time.

6. **Increase TCC Voting Membership Status Update**
   Haley Berry presented and updated on meetings being scheduled with each district. The goal is to wrap up these meetings by the end of March.

7. **Announcements: John Orr, ARC**
   - FTA Sections 5307, 5337, and 5339 Regional Suballocation Policy Development
   - The Atlanta Region’s Plan Open House – January 14th 3:00pm to 6:00 pm

   **Handouts supplied at meeting:** None
   **Handouts supplied in advance on ARC website** ([http://www.atlantaregional.com/tcc](http://www.atlantaregional.com/tcc))
   - Agenda + Presentations