

**AUGUSTA REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION STUDY (ARTS)
 JOINT TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE AND CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
 VIA ZOOM OR 535 TELFAIR STREET, THIRD FLOOR, TRAINING ROOM
 WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 2022 at 10:30 A.M.
 MEETING MINUTES**

| ARTS TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE | |
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| TCC VOTING MEMBERS ATTENDING: | TCC VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: |
| <p>Carla Delaney, ARTS MPO Project Director Corbett Reynolds, P.E. District Engineer represented by Ellen Wright Nedric Green/Tom Caiafa, GDOT Dr. Hameed Malik, Director, City of Augusta Engineering Dept. Sharon Dottery, Director represented by Dr. Oliver Page Alex Bennett, SCDOT Program Manager Mike Przybylowicz, City of Aiken Engineering Joel Duke, Director of Aiken County represented by LJ Peterson Thomas Zeaser, Engineer, North Augusta Rashad Pinckney, SCDOT Planning Engineer Kyle Titus, Director of Columbia County Engineering Tommy Paradise, City of North Augusta Planning Director Herbert Judon Jr., Director, Augusta Regional Airport represented by Greg Larsen Christine Chandler, LSCOG</p> | <p>Teresa Crain, Aiken County Engineer Curtis Murphy, City of New Ellenton John Ussery, Augusta Traffic Engineer Scott Sterling, Director, Columbia County Planning Marya Moultrie, City of Aiken Planning Director Matt Schlachter, Columbia County represented by Steve Exley</p> |
| TCC NON-VOTING MEMBERS ATTENDING: | TCC NON-VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: |
| | <p>Eric Duff Yolanda Morris, FHWA (SC) Andy Crosson, CSRA-RC Olivia Lewis, FHWA (GA) Carole Burrowbridge, ADA Augusta Phil Peevy, FTA Frank Childs, GDOT</p> |
| CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE | |
| CAC VOTING MEMBERS ATTENDING: | CAC VOTING MEMBERS ABSENT: |
| <p>Dr. Chris Noah, Columbia County</p> | <p>Martin Cochran, Aiken County Shirley Abney, Aiken County Bill Busser, Aiken County Joe Collins, Columbia County Hafeez Chaudhry, Columbia County Eric Kennedy, Columbia County Russell Foster, Columbia County Frank Plumley, Columbia County</p> |

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| | J. Ashley Williams , Edgefield County Geneva Jackson , Aiken County |
| OTHERS ATTENDING | |
| | Mariah Harris , Strategic Planning Manager Marcus Holland , Transportation Planner June Hamal , Augusta Engineering |

I. Welcome and Introductions (Acknowledge Zoom)

The ARTS Joint Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee meeting opened with greetings and introductions, starting with a roll call of the ARTS Committee Voting members, followed by introductions from the zoom meeting attendees.

II. Approval of Minutes

A. Approve the minutes of the ARTS Joint Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee Meeting held on January 6, 2022. (TCC & CAC Vote)

After greetings and introductions, the ARTS Committee Voting members of the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee gave a motion to approve the minutes of the ARTS Joint Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee held on January 6, 2022.

III. Old Business

A. Future Mobility 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan – Aiken County Update presented by LP Peterson / Joel Duke (Informational Purposes Only)

LJ Peterson, representing Aiken County, reported to the ARTS Joint Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that there were no new updates on this agenda item.

IV. New Business

A. Adoption of the FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program presented by Mariah Harris (TCC & CAC Vote)

The ARTS MPO Strategic Planning Manager, Ms. Mariah Harris, presented to the ARTS Joint Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee a general summary of the ARTS MPO’s proposed FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which included an overview of the source of funds that would be available and budgeted for each of the work element activities in the MPO’s updated UPWP.

Other updates to the FY 23 UPWP highlighted by Ms. Harris included the following;

- ARTS MPO 2022 Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update
- *ARTS MPO 2023 Transportation Special Studies – UPWP Work Element 4.6. 1 to 4.6.10*
 - 5 Special studies for North Augusta Planning and Development
 - 3 Special studies for Aiken County Planning and Development
 - 2 Special studies for ARTS MPO

Comments received from GDOT:

Mr. Tom Caiafa of GDOT had commented on the work program budget for the ARTS MPO FY 23 UPWP, stating if the document had also included the source of funding amounts for the proposed Planning (PL) study (ARTS MPO Freight plan Update) the MPO would be putting forward for funding consideration at its upcoming meeting with the Georgia Association of MPOs (GAMPO).

In response to Mr. Caiafa's question, Ms. Harris had informed the ARTS Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that the ARTS MPO's current FY 23 UPWP only included the total funding budget that had currently been awarded to the MPO from GAMPO.

Mr. Caiafa, then suggested that the ARTS MPO modify its FY 23 UPWP budget total to reflect the PL funding for its proposed Freight Plan update. Mr. Caiafa explained to the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that the UPWP's early incorporation of the ARTS MPO's requested Freight Plan PL funding amount would allow the MPO some leeway in making future modifications to its FY 23 UPWP budget total, if necessary.

Mr. Caiafa also informed the ARTS MPO about the need of modifying its FY 23 UPWP to incorporate Planning Emphasis Areas (PEA) work element activities. Mr. Caiafa stated that the need to include PEA work element activities into the ARTS MPO's FY 23 UPWP was a recent recommendation by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Comments received from the Augusta Engineering Department:

Dr. Hameed Malik, Director of the City of Augusta Engineering Department, had a question in regards to the project location of the ARTS FY 23 UPWP Special Transportation Study, "U.S 278/5TH Street Intersection and Gateway Study".

In response to Dr. Malik's question, Ms. Harris informed the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that the FY 23 UPWP Special Transportation Study, "U.S 278/5TH Street Intersection and Gateway Study" is centered in North Augusta, South Carolina. Ms. Harris also reported that the North Augusta Planning and Development Department proposed the study. The intent of the research project would focus on aesthetic improvements along intersections based on the evaluation of recent traffic changes.

Motion:

After reviewing the ARTS MPO's proposed FY 23 UPWP and hearing the comments in regards to the PEAs and GAMPO PL funds from GDOT, the ARTS Joint Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee Voting members gave a motion to approve the FY 2023 UPWP with the addition of the PEAs and the ARTS MPO Freight Plan Update GAMPO PL funds.

B. Adoption of the 2021 Congestion Management Process Update presented by Marcus Holland (TCC &CAC Vote)

The ARTS MPO Transportation Planner, Mr. Marcus Holland, gave a presentation to the ARTS Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee which provided an overview of MPO's updated Congestion Management Process (CMP) during the fiscal year 2022. Mr. Holland's presentation of the ARTS 2021 CMP update gave an overview of the following;

- What is the Congestion Management Process
- History of the CMP with the ARTS MPO
- Overview of the ARTS MPO's CMP data collection methodology and data analysis report of the traffic conditions (number of traffic crashes within the most recent years, average commute times, traffic congestion report along road corridors, annual congestion cost per commuter) within the ARTS metropolitan planning area.
- Rundown on the ARTS MPO's CMP Performance Measure Metrics
- Next Steps on how the ARTS MPO would be moving forward with the 2021 CMP update

After the presentation, Mr. Holland concluded that the ARTS MPO would continue to explore other traffic congestion related data options for additional information that would contribute to future CMP updates while using its existing data collection of traffic congestion reports in its current CMP to proposed regional freight study report monitor the corridors of the MPO Boundary.

Mr. Holland also informed the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that during the upcoming months the U.S Census Bureau would be revising all the urban boundary areas across the states which could affect the footprint of the ARTS MPO's current urban boundary, which would require adjustments on future CMP updates.

After Mr. Holland completed his report, the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee gave a motion to approve the ARTS 2021 CMP update.

C. Adoption of the 2022 ARTS Regional Freight Plan Update GAMPO Application (TCC & CAC Vote)

ARTS MPO, presented by Ms. Mariah Harris, provided the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee with an overview of the list of tasks, project scope, and schedule for the MPO's proposed Freight plan update GAMPO application. The ARTS MPO noted that the scope of work for its proposed freight plan is anticipated to be from June 2022 to July 2023.

Comments:

Mr. Christopher Noland, a CAC member, had a question regarding whether the ARTS MPO had selected a consultant to work on its freight plan update.

In response to Mr. Noland's question, the ARTS MPO informed the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that the MPO had not yet selected a consultant to undertake its proposed freight plan update and that the process of procuring a consultant will come later upon receiving a funding award approval by the GAMPO committee.

Motion:

After the ARTS MPO had concluded its proposed regional freight study report, the ARTS Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee Voting members gave a motion to approve the ARTS MPO's freight plan GAMPO application.

D. Request for an additional \$75,000 of PL funds for the Whiskey Road Feasibility Study presented by LJ Peterson (TCC & CAC Vote)

Aiken County, represented by Ms. LJ Peterson, provided the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee with a brief overview of Aiken County's proposed Whiskey Road Feasibility Study.

Ms. LJ Peterson informed the ARTS Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that Aiken County is requesting additional funding of \$75,000 to be included in its special study proposal (Whiskey Road Feasibility Study), which would bring the total funding amount for the research project to \$125,000 (\$100,000 Federal/ \$25,000 Local). Ms. Peterson reported that the original programmed budget amount (\$50,000) for completing the proposed Whiskey Road Feasibility

Study was recognized as a less efficient funding amount based on the amount of work that would be required to finish the research project.

Ms. Peterson also reported that Aiken County would be prepared to fully fund the \$25,000 local match required.

Motion:

After Ms. Peterson had concluded her report, the ARTS Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee Voting members gave a motion to approve Aiken County's request for an additional \$75,000 of PL funds for the Whiskey Road Feasibility Study.

E. Bike and Pedestrian Plan Update presented by Mariah Harris(Informational Purposes Only)

The ARTS MPO Strategic Planning Manager, Ms. Mariah Harris, informed the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that the ARTS evaluation committee had reviewed a total of five procurement proposals submitted by a pool of consultants that qualified as candidates to take on updating the ARTS MPO Bike and Pedestrian Plan. Ms. Harris reported that the ARTS MPO has not yet procured a selected consultant to conduct the Bike and Pedestrian Plan Study.

E. Status of Regional Transportation Projects:

I. Georgia Highways

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), represented by Ms. Ellen Wright, provided the following updates in regards to its regional transportation projects;

1) Richmond County (P.1. 0013927): SR 4/ US 25 BU at Savannah River at South Carolina Line- TIA Bridge Replacement

Update:

- On schedule for March 2024 Let
 - Tier III Stage onsite Detour on construction
- MS4 Report Approved 02/07/2022
- HH & Bridge Layout Approved on January 26, 2022
- UST Phase II Complete
- New cost estimate submitted to OPD August 17, 2021
 - CST -\$52, 415, 063.00
 - UTL -\$1,044,138.00 (previously \$730,110.00)
 - Utility (UTL) meeting held July 2021

Milestone:

- Working on Right of Way (ROW) plans
 - ROW acquisition activities proposed for 2023
 - ROW Cost Estimates \$694,000.00
- PFPR Request was submitted on January 25, 2022

2) Richmond County (P.I. 0014907): SR 4/ US 1 at North Fork Creek – 4.7 Miles NW of Hephzibah Bridge Replacement with Onsite Detour

Update:

- Let to Construction
 - 6/18/2021
 - Clearwater Construction (Contractor)

- \$2,434,031.08
- Clearing and grubbing complete
 - Erosion control items being installed

Milestones:

- Traffic shift plan possibly early March 2022

3) Richmond County (P.I. 210327): 1-20 at Savannah River and Augusta Canal - Bridge Replacement at Augusta Canal and Savannah River

Update:

- Contractor; Superior Construction Company Southeast, LLC
 - Contract Amount - \$73, 654, 630.27
- Projected completion in September 2022

Construction Progress:

- Phase 3 – Area 3 Westbound (SC Roadway)
 - Existing concrete slab removal at various locations
 - Grading roadway and placing GABC
- Phase 3 – Bridge 1 (Augusta Canal)
 - Demo of existing WB bridge is ongoing
- Phase 3 – Bridge 2 Westbound (Savannah River)
 - Installing metal decking for spans 6-9

4) Richmond (P.1. 0009916): -SR 88@ CR 58/ Bath Edie Road Single Lane Roundabout

Update:

- On schedule for June 2022 Let

Financials:

- Cost Estimates 07/22.2021
 - CST: \$ 2, 117, 373.25
 - UTL: \$177,019.20

Targets Milestones:

- ROW & Environmental Certification Due 04/01/22
- CST Auth Due 04/29/22

Comments:

Mr. Christopher Noland, a CAC member, had a question regarding whether South Carolina was contributing to the funding of the bridge replacement projects (Project Number# 210327) at the Augusta Canal and Savannah River on I-20.

In response to Mr. Noland’s questions, Ms. Wright of GDOT reported that South Carolina was contributing to the bridge replacement projects.

II. South Carolina Highways

The South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT), represented by Mr. Alex Bennett, provided the following updates in regards to its regional transportation projects;

Project List

1) SC 118 (Hitchcock Parkway) Corridor Improvement (P.I. 0040695)

Planned Schedule and Project Status:

Milestones

- Right-of-Way obligated in December 2018 with 53 of 53 tracts secured.
- Letting – 12/8/2020
 - Construction low bid received was \$13,882,375.18
 - The project was awarded to Reeves Construction Company

2) SC 126 (Belvedere-Clearwater Road) Widening (P.I. 0041446)

Planned Schedule and Project Status:

Milestones

- Plan Development is 100% complete
- Environmental Permitting Coordination is complete
- Right-of-Way Phase is complete – Right-of-Way Consultant (PRIMACQ) has secured the right of way for the project (86 of 86 tracts secured)
- Construction Obligation – TBD
- Letting – TBD

3) SC 19 (Whiskey Road) at Eagle Road and S-447 (Old Whiskey Road) Intersection Improvement (P.I. P037361)

Planned Schedule and Project Status:

Milestones

- SCDOT has negotiated a contract with Parrish and Partners to provide design services.
- Public Information Meeting – held Tuesday, July 23, 2019
 - Comment Period ended Wednesday, August 7th. 77 comments received
 - SCDOT redesigned the intersection to move Old Whiskey Road away from Eagle Road with appropriate intersection spacing and sight distance.
- SCDOT presented project revisions to the City of New Ellenton Council meeting on October 21, 2019.
- Construction Obligation – 04/2022

4) Aiken/North Augusta Bike Route Signage (P.I. P039805)

Planned Schedule and Project Status:

Milestones

- SCDOT has completed the design for this project
- Schedule
 - The construction low bid received was \$13,800.74
 - The project was awarded to LU, Incorporated

Comments:

Mr. Tommy Paradise, Director of the North Augusta Planning and Development Department and member of the Technical Coordinated Committee, had a question regarding SCDOT's project scope for roadway improvements near Interstate-20 Exit 1 in North Augusta, South Carolina. Mr. Paradise expressed to SCDOT of his interest in wanting to know whether the department of transportation had put forth a bid to undertake a project for improving the Westbound Exit (Roundabouts) near the Interstate-20 Exit 1 in North Augusta, South Carolina.

In response to Mr. Paradise's question, SCDOT, represented by Mr. Bennet, informed the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that he would check into verifying if a project for the Westbound Exit was included in SCDOT's overall project scope for roadway improvements near Interstate-20 Exit 1.

III. Augusta Transit

Augusta Transit, represented by the Transit Deputy Director, Dr. Oliver Page, had reported that his department currently has three RFPs in progress. The following items below were the RFI and RFPs noted by Dr. Page to be in progress;

- 1) RFP for Microtransit/Dynamic-Responsive Software as a Service (Saas) Technology Due November 15, 2021. Two(2) vendors responded. On January 14, 2022, two (2) vendors gave virtual presentations on their responses. Price and contract negotiations are ongoing.
- 2) RFP Fixed Route Planning, Scheduling, and Run-Cutting Software Program Due November 29, 2021. Four (4) entities responded. Three (3) were disqualified. RFP to be reissued.
- 3) RFQ Low Emission No Emission Bus & Infrastructure Feasibility Rapid Review Study and Transition Plan.
- 4) RFI – Battery Electric Zero-Emission Transit Buses Due October 4, 2021. Seven (7) vendors responded. In January 2022, Augusta Transit met virtually with Gainesville Regional Transit (Gainesville FL) and Charleston Area Regional Transportation (Charleston GA) to determine their experience with electric buses. Augusta Transit aims to select one electric bus OEM to partner with (on LoNo Application) by end of January 2022.

Other Transit Updates reported by Dr. Page included the following:

- Dr. Page informed the Policy Committee that Augusta Transit is currently awaiting the announcement by the Federal Transit Administration for the Low No-Vehicle Program Grant Funding Competition. Dr. Page noted that Augusta Transit will be partnering with the Center for Transportation and the Environment, an Atlanta-based clean energy institute non-profit organization, in preparing a robust LoNo Grant Application, as well as draft a transition plan.
- Augusta Transit reported that its ridership in the 4th quarter of 2021 (Oct thru Dec) totaled 104,435 compared to 183, 328 in 2020, a 43% decrease from 2020.
- Dr. Page also reported that Augusta Transit provided a bus shuttle bus service for the homeless and transient population on February 11 of 2022 to attend a local event, "Bridge the Gap Resource Fair", at the center of Hope Salvation Army on Green Street in Augusta, Georgia.
- Dr. Page presented preliminary findings from a bus stop inventory exercise (Secrets Revealed: Augusta Transit's Bus Stop Inventory) at the Georgia Transit Association Conference, Jekyll Island December 10, 2021.
- Augusta Transit is currently working with the Augusta Engineering Department to upgrade its current bus stops signs via funding from the Transportation Alternative Program (TAP).

Lastly, Dr. Page informed the Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee that he will provide a draft report of Augusta Transit's bus stop inventory for their review at the next upcoming Joint Citizen Advisory Committee and Technical Coordinated Committee meeting.

IV. Best Friend Express

Ms. Christine Chandler, Transit Manager of Best Friend Express, had reported that the Best Friend Express transit agency's fixed-route bus service had experienced an increase in total passenger trips from July 2021 to December 2021. The following updates were reported by Best Friend Express regarding its service operations;

- The Best Friend Express Blue Route was estimated to have the highest total trips (4,984)
- The total overall fixed-route trips were 10,560
- A total of 4,873 seniors and individuals with disability trips were provided by Best Friend Express during its 130-day service operations.

V. Augusta Regional Airport

No report from the Augusta Regional Airport

V. Other Business

- FY 2022 Transportation Alternatives Projects (TAP) Call for Projects – 2nd Round
- Next meeting is scheduled for May 4, 2022

VI. Adjourn;

Meeting Adjourned at 11:45 am