

## **Stakeholder Advisory Committee – Meeting #1**

March 27, 2017 | 6:00 – 8:00 PM

Forsyth County Government – Commission Chambers

110 East Main Street; Cumming, GA

### **Attendees**

Melton Bennett, Resident Stakeholder

Jason May, Lanier-Forsyth Rotary Group

Steve Dabbs, Commission 5 Appointee

Seth Thomas, Thomas Lumber Co., Commission 4 Appointee

S. M. Commission District 2

Carter Patterson, District 1 Appointee

Goode, United Way

Greg, District 3 Appointee

James McCoy, Chamber of Commerce

### **Summary of Presentation**

Michael Kray, Consultant Team Project Manager, opened the meeting with a brief presentation about the planning process and outcomes and the overall goal, which is to identify projects that can be funded and implemented. A review of the 2011 plan showed a high percentage of projects funded/implemented. He next reviewed funding sources which include the SPLOST, the bond program and other resources that the County uses to implement transportation projects.

Funded through the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC), local transportation plans are the building blocks to a larger, regional transportation plan. The ARC provided 80% of the funds for this three step process which includes an inventory of existing conditions, an assessment of needs, and recommendations. The plan horizon is 2040 and is currently in the inventory of existing conditions phase. The assessment of needs phase will analyze strengths and weaknesses and is comprehensive, encompassing roadways, bike ped, freight, and transit. Identified needs will become recommended projects that can address the major issues. Projects will be prioritized and presented to the Committees and to the public before the recommendations are finalized. The process concludes in December of 2017 with the County Commission Board to adopt in January 2018.

Data analysis methods will examine a range of demographics using census data such as poverty, minority, zero car households, senior populations, and population density. Land use and community facilities identified through the recently completed Comprehensive Plan will also be assessed. Roadway characteristics such as level of service/roadway congestion, and bridge status are being evaluated using County data, model projections, and roadway volumes.

Public and stakeholder input was identified as another important data collection method. Outreach is scheduled to occur at an ongoing rate throughout the process and will use a variety of methods to share and collect information including a project website, public meetings and a community survey. The project will have a presence in the community as well as online.

The presentation concluded with an overview of plan goals and objectives. The US Department of Transportation's seven goal areas were referenced as a starting point as well as the Georgia Statewide Strategic Plan goals, which are aligned with the federal goals. The Forsyth Plan goals should align well with the federal and state goals. They should also be "SMART" (Specific, Measureable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound) in order to quantify the success of the transportation program.

## **Summary of Action Items**

### Review Plan Goals + Objectives

- The goal to "Manage Congestion" is a very broad goal – how can this be quantified?
- Need a goal that recognizes the rapid changes in technology.
  - Use of technology to manage traffic via signal timing is an opportunity
  - Any idea of the feasibility/timeline of implementing such technology?
    - This is feasible now. Corridors are actively managed right now by GDOT.
    - Need wireless technology to link signals so that they can then communicate.
    - Fiber optic was the only option of linking corridors in the past (county has 2 that are managed). Now wireless technology will make this possible.
    - GDOT is also moving over to wireless modems from hardwire modems. They are upgrading and will save the county \$90 per signal. New technology will help us be able to communicate with signals in real time. It is now practical to establish a signal command center.

- Radar vehicle detection is also an emerging technology that will be able to detect pedestrians, do truck counts, and can distinguish between modes. Can be adjusted to monitor many lanes at one time.
- Use of cellphone data (Waze, etc.)
  - There is no communication between cell users and signals/signal timing
  - Some data from GPS and handheld devices is available to identify delays and bottlenecks, etc.
  - Have to also watch for state/federal level policy changes.
  - There are many unknowns that we have to consider before bringing that to the public realm
  - Autonomous vehicles will help alleviate congestion.
- Need a goal that ties that back to citizens and that gives public ownership of this project.
- Include a goal re: Travel demand management, managed lanes, encouraging ride sharing, etc.
- Public design standards (mast arms at intersections, etc.)– is this addressed at this level?
  - Will be handled during conceptual design, later in the process after planning.
- Yellow blinking left turns (Johns Creek) – is that something that can be considered?
  - Yes, at an additional cost to retrofit
- Is there a way to speak to driver expectations or continuity of intersection design to make sure people know what to do when they approach intersections?
  - Can be looked at under safety
    - Safety is an issue – distracted driving, an increase in accidents and claims due to high number of accidents and fatalities, etc.
- What data assumptions are being made re: growth?
  - The ARC travel demand model for population and employment growth is being used to plan for the worst case scenario.
- How much can be impacted in this plan by way of public input?
  - Intent is for this to be an open process and to get feedback from public.
  - Will use technical analysis to bring recommendations but need feedback from the public to ground-truth the findings. Public input will be collected along the way at all milestones.
- Want reassurance that the public’s voices will be heard.

- That is part of the purpose of this committee –to have members share info with neighbors.
- Asking for Committee’s help in asking people to get to the meetings.
- Can pass through traffic be assessed/measured?
  - Number of techniques to find out this info from the Travel Demand Model (via origin/destination outcomes)
  - There is a good deal of pass through traffic but it can be hard to track.
  - Can alternate routes be an objective/goal?

#### Review Existing Conditions Data

This included review of a series of maps depicting Level of Service during AM and PM peak flow, Bicycle and Pedestrian amenities, and High Crash Intersections. The Committee discussed issues and concerns, which were recorded directly on the maps.

#### Review Community Survey + Public Involvement

The Committee was provided with a draft of the community survey questions. Input was received during the session and can be submitted to the Consultant Team via email over the next week before the survey is finalized and launched on April 12<sup>th</sup>.