

## MINUTES

### MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS

#### PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE

#### METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

October 31, 2011

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on October 31, 2011 at 10:02 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6<sup>th</sup> Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

#### **Board Members Present**

Harold Buckley, Sr.  
Wendy Butler  
Frederick Daniels, Jr.  
Jim Durrett  
Roderick E. Edmond  
Barbara Babbit Kaufman, Chair  
Jannine Miller\*  
Adam Orkin

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Beverly A. Scott; Deputy General Manager/COO Dwight A. Ferrell; Chief Business Support Services Theodore Basta Jr.; AGMs Davis Allen, Wanda Dunham, Ben Graham, Georgetta Gregory, Jonnie Keith, Cheryl King, Barbara Kirkland (Acting), Rich Krisak, Ryland McClendon, Elizabeth O'Neill and Gary Pritchett; Sr. Directors Johnny Dunning, Jr., Kevin Hurley and David Springstead; Directors Anton Bryant, Sharon Crenchaw, John Crocker, Reginald Diamond, Scott Haggard, Jennifer Jinadu-Wright, Knox O'Callaghan, Carol Smith and Elvin Tobin; Managers Donna DeJesus, Paul Grether, Cara Hodgson, Ivelisse Matos, Janide Sidifall, Gregory Snyderman, Roosevelt Stripling, Marvin Toliver, Denise Whitfield and Beverley Williams. Executive Manager to the Board Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid; Office Administrator II Tracie Roberson. Others in Doug Chambers, Kawal Grover, Harold Johnson, Jason Morgan, Joshua Piermarini, Srinath Remala, Robin Salter, James Watkins.

Also in attendance Charles Pursley, Jr. of Pursley of Pursley, Lowery & Meeks; Richard Marsh; Lynn Riley of MARTOC; Matt Pollack of MATC; Alice Wiggins of Parsons Brinckerhoff; Jim Brown of URS.

\*Jannine Miller is Executive Director of Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) and is therefore a non-voting member of the MARTA Board of Directors

**Approval of the September 26, 2011 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes**

---

On motion by Mr. Durrett seconded by Mr. Orkin, the minutes were unanimously approved by a vote of 5 to 0, with 5 members present.

**Briefing – Adoption of I-20 East Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)**

Dr. Crocker briefed the Committee on the I-20 East Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) that will come before the Board for adoption at the November 28, 2011 meeting. The briefing focused on the general alignment and station locations for a fixed-guideway transit service in the I-20 East Corridor.

*Background Work*

- Work on the I-20 East Corridor has continued to advance since the late 1990s
- In 2004, a preliminary LPA was selected with a fixed-guideway BRT from the Mall at Stonecrest to Central Atlanta to be upgraded to a rail line at a future date
  - This work did not specify how the future rail connection would reach Central Atlanta from Moreland Avenue
- The Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) began express bus routes in the corridor, building service from 2004 from 2010
- The Transit Planning Board (TPB) completed the long-term vision for transit in the Atlanta region in 2008, Concept 3, and identified I-20 East as a potential rail line
- MARTA undertook the I-20 East Transit Initiative in late 2009 to refine the previous work, take into consideration the new service, incorporate the work of the TPB and resolve the previously unresolved issue of the connection in Central Atlanta

*Public Involvement*

- Numerous Stakeholder interviews conducted since 2010
- SAC/TAC Meetings
  - September 2010
  - December 2010

- April/May 2011
- October 2011
- Public Meetings
  - October 2010
  - May 2011
  - October 2011

*Purpose and Need*

- The purpose of the I-20 East Transit Initiative is to provide transit investments that enhance east-west mobility and improve accessibility to residential and employment centers within the corridor
- The existing and future roadway congestion in the I-20 East Corridor will have an increasingly detrimental effect on automobile and bus transit travel in the corridor
- The proposed transit investments are intended to improve travel times and travel reliability by providing a rapid transit service for commuter traveling to and from Central Atlanta

*Evaluation of Alternatives*

- Tier 1
  - Mainline Alternatives
  - Downtown Connectivity Alternatives
  - Panola Road Alternatives
- Tier 2
  - Six mode specific

*Tier 1 Public Comments/Results*

- Opposition to Panola Road and Edgewood Alternatives
  - Public emails
  - Meetings
- Alternatives parallel to I-20 for length of corridor
  - Over 50% support from online survey and public comments (900+ responses)
  - Highest performance in ridership and travel time

- On-street Downtown Connectivity Alternative had lowest ridership

*HRT 1*

- Heavy Rail Transit serving stations along I-20 between the Mall at Stonecrest and Downtown Atlanta
- Ties into the MARTA rail network just south of Garnett Station
- Serves all existing stations on the MARTA north-south line between Garnett and Lindbergh Center Stations

*LRT 1*

- Light Rail Transit serving stations along I-20 between the Mall at Stonecrest and Downtown Atlanta
- Provides connections to existing Garnett and Five Points Stations

*BRT 1*

- Bus Rapid Transit serving stations along I-20 between the Mall at Stonecrest and Downtown Atlanta
- BRT would operate in a dedicated busway adjacent to I-20
- Provides connections to existing Garnett and Five Points Stations

*HRT 2*

- Heavy Rail Transit serving stations between the Mall at Stonecrest and Downtown Atlanta
- Operates next to I-20 to Glenwood Avenue then runs north in a tunnel to a connection with existing MARTA east-west rail line
- Would connect the MARTA east-west rail line between Edgewood/Candler Park and East Lake Stations

*LRT 2*

- Light Rail Transit serving stations between the Mall at Stonecrest and Midtown Atlanta
- Operates next to I-20 to Glenwood Park within the City of Atlanta then follows Beltline alignment to existing North Avenue Station

*HRT 3*

- Heavy Rail Transit from Mall at Stonecrest to Downtown Atlanta along I-20, I-285 and the existing MARTA east-west rail line
- Would operate along I-20 and I-285 then connect to existing MARTA east-west rail line at Indian Creek Station
- Would operate as an express service along existing MARTA east-west line serving limited stations
- Areas along I-20 inside the Perimeter would be served with BRT

*Tier 2 Public Comment/Results (to date, October 19, 2011)*

- Opposition to HRT 2 from Kirkwood Neighborhood Organization, City of Decatur and NPU-O
- Support for HRT 1 and LRT 1 from KNO, NPU-O
  - Best technical performer, but highest cost and most potential displacements
- Support for HRT 3 from City of Decatur
  - Least cost and least potential displacements
- LRT 2 and BRT 1
  - Least new riders and high number of displacements

*Next Steps*

- Finalize Technical Analysis – November 2011
- Close online survey – October 31, 2011
- Complete final briefings
- Return to Planning and External Relations Committee with Recommended LPA for approval in November and to the full Board for final approval in December

Mr. Daniels asked what is considered respectable ridership.

Dr. Crocker said above 5,000 new riders per day.

Mr. Daniels asked is HRT within FTA funding.

Dr. Crocker said the resolution will enable to project to move forward in the federally competitive New Starts process for funding.

Mr. Buckley commented that travel time is a key factor; cost over time should not be traded.

Mrs. Butler commented that HRT 3 will fare well.

Dr. Crocker said, based on technical analysis and community input, Planning staff will be coming back to the Board with a recommendation for either LRT 1, HRT 3 and HRT 1 as the Locally Preferred Alternative; the trade-off to consider is ridership versus cost.

Dr. Crocker introduce Janide Sidifall and announced that she would be take over as Project Manager.

### **Briefing – Clifton Corridor Alternatives Analysis Study Update**

Mr. Morgan provided the Committee an update on the Clifton Corridor Alternatives Analysis Study. He prefaced the briefing by noting, the purpose of the Clifton Corridor Alternatives Analysis is to identify a high-capacity transit investment that provides reliable and competitive travel times to and from the Clifton Corridor by:

- Increasing the accessibility of transit services for both commuter and residents
- Improving mobility between Lindbergh Center, Clifton Corridor employment centers and Decatur
- Integrating with other regional high-capacity transit projects

MARTA in coordination with the Clifton Corridor Transportation Management Association is conducting an Alternatives Analysis (AA) for the Clifton Corridor. The project team is finalizing the screening process to determine the Locally Preferred Alternative.

One alignment and three transit technologies were advanced to the final screen. This included:

Transit Alignment: Lindbergh to Avondale via CSX alignment (adjacent to and outside of CSX right-of-way), transitioning to Clairemont Road. Scott Boulevard, North Decatur Road and

- DeKalb Industrial Way. Transit Alignment assumes Emory right-of-way donation and/or GDOT/DeKalb County buyoff on in-street running
- Proposed Transit Technologies: Heavy Rail (HRT), Light Rail (LRT) and Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)

This has been a two-tier screening process. Staff is at the end of the second screening and will formulate recommendations based on input from the community. Evaluation criteria included: Mobility/Travel Efficiency, Land Use/Economic Development, Cost Effectiveness and Environmental Impact. Additional considerations are methodology and assumptions, new daily ridership as well as Operating and Capital costs.

*Results of Technical Screening Process*

- Screen 1 Technical Analysis
  - BRT 1
    - Projected Daily Riders – 14,900
    - New Daily Riders – 4,100
    - Employment within ½ mile – 16 jobs per acre
    - Projected Capital Cost - \$740M
    - Projected O&M Annual Cost - \$11M
    - Length – 8.3 miles
    - Capital Cost Per Mile - \$184M
    - Public Support – Moderate
  - LRT 1
    - Projected Daily Riders – 16,700
    - New Daily Riders – 5,100
    - Employment within ½ mile – 16 jobs per acre
    - Projected Capital Cost - \$1B
    - Projected O&M Annual Cost - \$13B
    - Length – 8.3 miles
    - Capital Cost Per Mile - \$149M
    - Public Support – High
  - HRT
    - Projected Daily Riders – 27,100
    - New Daily Riders – 10,800

- Employment within ½ mile – 17.6 jobs per acre
  - Projected Capital Cost - \$768M
  - Projected O&M Annual Cost - \$33M
  - Length – 4.7 miles
  - Capital Cost Per Mile - \$111M
  - Public Support – Moderate
- Screen 2 Technical Analysis
    - BRT 1
      - Projected Daily Riders – 15,300
      - New Daily Riders – 4,000
      - Employment within ½ mile – 16 jobs per acre
      - Projected Capital Cost - \$873M
      - Projected O&M Annual Cost - \$7M
      - Length – 8.3 miles
      - Capital Cost Per Mile - \$105M
      - Public Support – Moderate
    - LRT 1
      - Projected Daily Riders – 17,500
      - New Daily Riders – 5,300
      - Employment within ½ mile – 16 jobs per acre
      - Projected Capital Cost - \$988M
      - Projected O&M Annual Cost - \$8.4M
      - Length – 8.3 miles
      - Capital Cost Per Mile - \$118M
      - Public Support – High
    - HRT
      - Projected Daily Riders – 18,400
      - New Daily Riders – 6,900
      - Employment within ½ mile – 17.6 jobs per acre
      - Projected Capital Cost - \$1.4B
      - Projected O&M Annual Cost - \$21M
      - Length – 4.7 miles
      - Capital Cost Per Mile - \$205M
      - Public Support – Moderate

- The project team is preparing for the final round of public input
  - Joint Stakeholders/Technical Advisory Committee meeting held on October 13, 2011
  - Public meeting held on October 25, 2011

*General Comments To-Date*

- Minimize impact to neighborhoods
- Preference for Light Rail Technology

*Staff Recommendation*

- LPA Recommendation pending outcome of technical analysis, input from the October 13th TAC/SAC meeting and input from the October 25th Public Meeting

*Next Steps*

- Approval of LPA - November Committee Meeting
- Board Adoption of LPA - December

Mr. Daniels said each alternative includes a tunnel.

Mr. Morgan confirmed that there are tunnels for all three alternatives. He further noted there is a need to get under the CSX rail line and avoid impact to Lenox Road. The FTA has guidance to be careful about transit alternatives running parallel to freight.

Mr. Daniels asked how much is proposed for right-of-way.

Mr. Morgan answered fifty (50) feet and an additional twenty (20) feet to include a station.

Mr. Daniels asked where maintenance and facilities would be housed for light rail.

Mr. Morgan said Amour Yard would need to be modified. Another facility would need to be provided on the other side of the corridor; i.e., DeKalb Industrial Way.

Mr. Orkin asked hypothetically, if you could plan before anyone was there would it be heavy rail.

Mr. Morgan said heavy rail would have been the first choice.

Ms. King said moving forward costs will be refined. This may come out of sync with TIA.

Mr. Daniels said diversion in the numbers has been the challenge.

Ms. King agreed that it is a dynamic process.

Mr. Daniels said the Board needs to see solid numbers put together.

Ms. Miller said it is very important to define what the project is so the public will know what they are voting on.

#### **Briefing – FY 2011 Quality of Service Study**

---

Ms. Smith briefed the Committee on MARTA's FY 2011 Quality of Service Study.

MARTA's FY 2011 Quality of Service Study results reflect customer opinions which were collected from July 2010 through June 2011. This time period includes the impacts resulting from a major service reduction and a fare increase (Pass prices) in the fall of 2010.

Presentation of the General Rider Survey addresses overall customer satisfaction, loyalty and the analysis of over 40 different attributes that rate MARTA's perceived performance in six (6) service dimensions including Cleanliness, Customer Service, Employee Performance, Mechanical Reliability, On-Time Performance, and Safety. A total of 8,156 interviews were conducted over the fiscal year. The reliability or margin of error for the overall results is +/- 1.06% at the 95% confidence level.

Demographically ridership groups are shifting slightly.

- Changes are consistent with higher percentages of Transit Dependent riders which have increased from 46% in FY 2008 to 64% in FY 2011.
- About nine out of ten MARTA passengers (88.4%) live in MARTA's service area, represented by:
  - City of Atlanta (37.7%)
  - DeKalb County (34.6%)
  - Unincorporated Fulton County (16.1%)

As expected with major budget and service level reductions, compared to FY 2008 results:

- Overall customer satisfaction has decreased by 3.3%
- Loyalty has declined by 2.5%.

When asked specifically about bus and rail services' satisfaction, over the past year:

- Bus service satisfaction declined by 1.3%, from 80.2% to 78.9%
- Rail service satisfaction has increased by 1.3%, from 83.2% to 84.5%

For each of the 41 service level attributes raised by customers, this presentation reports:

- The average or mean score for FY 2011
- The differential between the mean scores of FY 2010 and FY 2011
- The median score for FY 2011 which is the number that represents the halfway mark or the 50th percentile score of all respondents to better understand the frequency of specific responses.

Specific to Nuisance Behavior, defined as..."customer behavior which may be disturbing to others but not necessarily illegal, though probably against MARTA rules of conduct"...

- Almost one quarter (22.9%) of MARTA bus riders reported they had witnessed disturbing behavior by other passengers on the bus within thirty (30) days of their interview
- Rail riders responded by saying almost three out of ten (29.4%) of them had witnessed disturbing behavior by other passengers within the same time period
- Bus and station scores have increased by 1.4% and 1.0% respectively
- Rail scores decreased by 1.7% over the past fiscal year
- Less than one (1) percent of patrons on the bus (0.4%), on the train (0.6%), and at stations (0.3%) said they had been victims of crime within thirty (30) days of their interview.

Research and Analysis will continue to monitor the customer behavioral impacts to determine if the recent reduction of front line staff has had an impact on the overall quality of the customer experience.

The FY 2012 Quality of Service and the Passenger Environment Study reporting will be combined. Upon rollout, this revised approach to measuring Customer Satisfaction levels will assist this agency in:

- Answering questions arising from QOS customer inputs
- Assisting Operations and Staff Departments in pinpointing specific areas requiring attention
- Positively impacting subsequent overall customer satisfaction levels in the selected areas
- Providing the ability to compare customer survey response to in-field observations of the actual delivery of transit services

Mr. Daniels asked what MARTA is doing for the areas that need attention.

Ms. Smith said audits are taking place before, during and after routes. Additionally, Directors are using the feedback to make improvements to their respective areas – MARTA is working diligently to make necessary improvements.

Dr. Edmond said this is an excellent report. It allows the Board and staff to understand exactly where MARTA is in the eyes of the customers. He added that it would be helpful to see how the Authority's results compare to those of other transit agencies.

### **Briefing – Transportation Investment Act (TIA) Survey Results**

Ms. Smith briefed the Committee on the results of two studies concerning the Transportation Investment Act (TIA).

- On September 25, 2011 the Atlanta Journal Constitution (AJC) reported the results of a poll regarding the awareness and attitudes toward issues related to the T-SPLOST referendum. 625 residents of the ten-county Metro Atlanta area were polled. Not many respondents knew of the referendum – 23.8% were “somewhat familiar” and 4.5% were “very familiar” with the transportation referendum
- A slight majority of Metro Atlanta, 51%, reported that they would vote for the referendum if the election were held today. More than one-tenth, 13%, were undecided

- 33.9% were at least “somewhat familiar” with proposed projects for the ten-county region
- 31.6% of respondents were at least “somewhat familiar” with specific projects proposed for their counties
- When asked to rate MARTA’s performance as a regional transit system, 33.1% of the AJC poll respondents rated the system as “excellent” or “good” – despite the fact that MARTA is not a regional transit system
- The percentage of respondents who gave MARTA an “excellent” or “good” rating was much higher among residents of Clayton, Fulton and DeKalb (51%)
- The AJC poll did not break out ratings among users and non-users of public transit – 20% use at least one of the area transit systems regularly
- Respondents were asked to indicate whether they agreed or disagreed with each of the 16 statements about the referendum and its potential impact on their communities
  - Overall, a majority of respondents demonstrated a tendency to agree with statements that indicated support for the referendum
  - The few statements where the majority expressed doubts about the referendum revealed a lack of trust in state and local officials to eliminate the tax when promised, a lack of confidence in MARTA as the managing authority and some ambivalence about the best balance of road versus public transit funds
- In September 2011 MARTA’s Office of Research and Analysis conducted a study on opinions about the TIA Referendum to assess:
  - Rider awareness of the referendum
  - Likelihood riders will support TIA Referendum with their votes
  - Motivations for supporting or not supporting the TIA referendum
  - Perceived importance of specific TIA projects and quality of life benefits the projects would provide
- The major findings of the studies are as follows:
  - A large majority of riders agreed that TIA projects would provide quality of life improvements that were “very important”

- The top two most important improvements are safety (66.4%) and reduced travel time (66.2%)
- Respondents also rated “keep MARTA in good repair” (60.9%), “restoring Clayton County bus service” (49.2%) and “services for seniors and persons with disabilities” (48.5%) as main priorities
- The two most requested projects not included in TIA are service expansion into other counties (32%) and additional routes and buses (15.4%) to decrease travel time which has been affected by the recent MARTA service cuts

### **Other Matters**

---

Mrs. McClendon announced the following upcoming meetings and events:

- ARC State of the Region Breakfast – November 4
- Governor’s Task Force Meeting – November 9
- City of Atlanta Jurisdictional Briefing – November 16
- Fulton County Delegation Briefing – November 16
- FTA Title VI & Environmental Justice Circulars Information Session – November 17
- Laredo Solar Panels Canopy Ribbon Cutting – November 18

\*\*\*\*\*

The Board Members reviewed a draft version of the Proposals to Enhance Regional Transit Governance. They agreed to vote on its submission to the Governor’s Transit Task Force at the Business Management Committee meeting immediately following.

### **Adjournment**

---

The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 11:50 am

Respectfully submitted,

Kellee N. Mobley  
Senior Executive Administrator to the Board