

# Valdosta – Lowndes



## Metropolitan Planning Organization

**Minutes  
Policy Committee  
June 23, 2010  
2:30 pm**

<b>Members Present</b>	<b>Organization</b>
John Fretti	City of Valdosta, Mayor
Larry Hanson	City of Valdosta, Manager
Jason Davenport	Lowndes County Planner (Ashley Paulk Rep.)
Joe Pritchard	Lowndes County, Manager
John Leonard	SGRC
<b>Others Present</b>	
Corey Hull	SGRC VLMPO
David Morgan	SGRC
Whitney Biggers	SGRC
Brent Thomas	GDOT
Von Shipman	City of Valdosta, Engineer

### **Agenda Item #1 – Call to Order**

John Leonard called the meeting to order at 2:30 p.m.

### **Agenda Item #2 – Introductions/Roll Call**

John Leonard welcomed those present and thanked everyone for attending.

### **Agenda Item #3 – Approval of Regular Meeting Minutes from June 8, 2010**

Larry Hanson made a motion to approve the minutes. John Fretti seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

### **Agenda Item #4– Old Business**

- A. 2035 Transportation Plan Draft Document Discussion and Prioritization of Projects:  
Corey introduced the 2035 TP Draft Documents and went over the Financial Plan. He explained the amounts listed including balances for each entity involved. He also went over the list of illustrative projects and the project selection criteria used to prioritize the I-75 bridge projects. Corey mentioned that the traffic counts listed need to be doubled because they only reflect one direction traffic numbers. Corey explained that the sight distance numbers were not calculated using engineering techniques, but were calculated by planning staff using GIS technology. Corey went over the recommendations made by the Technical Committee which included: 1) Operational improvements (turn lanes) on the Exit 18 Southbound ramp by

## Valdosta – Lowndes



### Metropolitan Planning Organization

2015 2) Exit 2 by 2020 3) Leaving Exits 22 & 29 as one project 4) Exit 11, Exit 5, Loch Laurel and major Exit 18 improvements were recommended to be illustrative. The TCC also recommended leaving un-programmed funding on the table. Corey stated that several people commented that the cost estimate for Exit 18 improvements was too high. Corey stated that if they were high, it should not be a problem.

Larry Hanson asked for economic analysis for each project. Corey explained the figures were payroll estimates within one mile of the project location. He stated he believed the figures were off.

Corey talked about the un-programmed funding and recommended that the money be programmed.

John Leonard asked if the projects being added to the plan could later be amended. Corey stated they could.

Jason Davenport asked what would be done about the varying cost estimates for the operational improvements to Exit 18. Corey explained that a detailed engineering report was needed, but it is safer to go with a higher estimate.

Von Shipman and Brent Thomas both agreed that ROW may change depending on the project's needs, but estimates range from \$400K to \$1M for Exit 18 ramp improvements.

Joe Pritchard asked about the large discrepancy in the estimates for the Western Perimeter project. Corey stated the cost estimation software has been wrong before, and that the estimates can be changed if more accurate information is available.

Larry Hanson asked about the environmental documents for Exits 22 & 29 and whether they would have to be redone if the project was moved out a few years. Brent Thomas stated that if they are pushed back they will have to be re-evaluated if the regulations change. He added that the environmental documents will not be signed until a funding year is assigned to a project.

John Fretti stated that since they have new traffic counts and economic impact data, the projects should be re-prioritized based on the new information. John Leonard expressed concern about the re-prioritization of projects throwing timelines off. Brent explained that due to fiscal restraints the projects are chosen by funding availability rather than timelines generally. Larry Hanson expressed the need to step back and re-evaluate the projects based on the new data noting that the Exit 18 project should be moved up on the list due to safety issues and economic impact data. John Fretti agreed, and he told the county that the city would

# Valdosta – Lowndes



## Metropolitan Planning Organization

happily take the #2 spot, as long as the county would support them on strongly pursuing the Exit 18 project as a whole. Joe Pritchard stated that he felt compelled to follow the TCC's recommendation. John Fretti stated the TCC should re-prioritize the projects based on the new data. Corey explained that if the Exit 18 project was put on the list the total funding would have to be found somewhere in the plan from other projects or the funds would have to be moved around. Joe Pritchard expressed concern about other projects being removed from the plan.

John Fretti made a motion to have the TCC re-evaluate the projects based on the new data and provide new prioritizations based on the new information to the Policy Committee. Joe Pritchard seconded the motion which was carried unanimously.

Jason Davenport asked if Corey's recommendation to program the excess funds would be discussed further. Larry Hanson expressed that it should for several reasons. After much discussion, the Policy Committee agreed that the TCC should re-think programming the available funds as well.

### Agenda Item #6 – New Business

#### A. Discussion on SR 821 Constitutional Amendment:

Corey explained SR 821 to allow GDOT to enter into multiyear construction agreements.

### Agenda Item #7 – Staff Update

#### A. Transit Implementation Update:

Corey stated the MPO has signed letters to return all transit money back to the feds and GDOT, and all of the capital contracts have been closed out. He also stated that the consultants have been asked to finish the report they started a year ago, and they are under contract to do so until July 2010.

### Agenda Item #8 – Privilege of the Floor/Public Comment

There were no comments.

### Agenda Item #9 - Next Meeting Date and Time

Corey stated that another meeting would be scheduled the following week.

The next regularly scheduled Policy meeting will be held on **September 7, 2010 at 1:30 p.m.**

### Agenda Item #10 - Adjournment

There being no further business, John Leonard adjourned the meeting at 3:55 p.m.