



# **Cherokee County Comprehensive Transportation Plan Update**

Technical Advisory Committee Meeting #2

June 10, 2015 | 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM | Cherokee County Administration Building

## **Attendees**

### Committee Members

Bessie Reina, Georgia DOT (Planning)  
Bill Sebring, Cherokee County Schools  
James Touchton, Council for Quality Growth  
Katie Coulburn, City of Woodstock  
Leslie Caceda, Atlanta Regional Commission  
Margaret Stallings, Cherokee County  
Nancy Moon, City of Holly Springs  
Quinton Spann, Georgia DOT  
Barry Tarver, Cherokee County

### Project Management Team

Geoff Morton, Cherokee County  
Maggie Maddox, MPE  
Nilesh Deshpande, Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Claudia Bilotto, Parsons Brinckerhoff  
John Palm, Parsons Brinckerhoff  
Jen Price, Sycamore Consulting

## **Summary**

Geoff Morton opened the meeting by welcoming attendees and thanking them for their participation in the planning update process. He stated that the purpose of this meeting will bring committee members up to date on the project since the last meeting and what's upcoming for the project. Geoff led the group through introductions and turned the meeting over to the Consultant Team Project Manager, John Palm.

John reviewed the agenda and began with an overview of the first round of public meetings. SR 20 was a popular topic of discussion among other issues. Many residents who attended the meeting in Canton/Bluffs were interested in this project. From the CTP perspective, the SR 20 project details are beyond the scope of this project. Geoff mentioned that GDOT is expected to distribute a media release soon that will update the public on that project.

The results of the prioritization showed interest in spending funds on Capacity Improvements, System Preservation and Ped/Bike Improvements. Transit Expansion received the least amount of support, however, the project team was surprised in the amount of



support it received. This input was used to project how much the County should spend on certain types of projects.

Maggie Maddox discussed the current transit study. Its purpose is to present a clear implementation plan for transit that is sustainable and that considers demographic changes within the County. The transit study tasks are very much in line with what is being achieved through the CTP. It examines every demand response trip provided by CATS and the land use to understand needs, who is in Cherokee and where they need to get when they do not have a car.

Maggie gave an overview of existing services and a summary of transit needs identified through the study. Woodstock shows a great need based on population. There is a potential to provide connection or connected service between Canton, Holly Springs and Woodstock. Other needs include real-time customer information to improve rider experience and stop amenities such as shelters to attract choice riders and make waiting for the bus more comfortable. Most riders are transit dependent; the County should begin focusing on attracting choice riders as well.

Maggie then talked about how transit scenarios are evaluated by discussing the evaluation framework which looks at performance as well as funding and affordability. The three transit scenarios - no change, moderate investment and high investment were presented as well as their performance for each evaluation factor. This is the current phase of the transit study. The team will do a more detailed analysis and cost analysis before closing out the study.

John talked about the conceptual trail planning effort. While it will not be a very detailed component, the team will collect information from previous trail and greenspace plans and will also look at publically controlled land to understand where new opportunities could be supported. Destinations are being identified to understand connectivity needs and then conceptual alignments will be developed. Information from this component will be given to the Parks and Recreation Department who will pick up where this study leaves off.

John then talked about the Plan Development Process and the final product of the CTP, which will be a recommended projects list. A funding strategy is another very essential part of the process that will be addressed since there is a wide range of projects from those that are easy to fund to more expansive, hard to fund projects.

The Project Identification Process was also discussed. This is an essential piece as there are 236 total projects. John talked about the breakdown for the projects by category/project type. Project funding is anticipated from a variety of sources including SPLOST funding at approximately \$300M. Funding estimates and project costs are in 2015 dollars. The increase in SPLOST funding is assumed to equal the inflation expected for project costs. GDOT funding (LMIG funds) is also expected to be available for CTP projects at approximately \$40M. Potential changes in funding availability will be closely monitored during the next Legislative session.



John then talked about the funding approach. It is important to note a local match is required for state/federally funded projects. Usually, state/federal dollars can be used on highway system projects while SPLOST dollars are allocated to local and smaller projects. However, SPLOST funds can be used to leverage state/federal funding as appropriate. Also, important to note is that state route/interstate projects must compete regionally for funding. John explained the need for the project prioritization process to be based on county transportation goals. Some key factors in project prioritization include congestion relief, cost-benefit ration, and deliverability.

John provided some detail of the Key Needs: Capacity and Operational improvements. He reminded the committee that while some projects are quantitatively sound, they may create some quantitative issues that should be considered and balanced. While some project will seemingly work on a pure transportation level, they may not work politically/qualitatively.

Lastly, John talked about the project's next steps which include developing a draft program to present to the public; a second round of public meetings to be held in two weeks in Canton and Woodstock; and finalizing the plan. There will be a final committee meeting in September with the final CTP to go for Board of County Commissioners adoption in the October timeframe.

### **Questions/Comments**

Q: Does the trails plan/map include the recommendations from the original green space plan from 2000?

A: We do not have that plan. *Cherokee will give a copy of the plan to the study team.*

Q: Regarding funding, will it touch on impact fees? Is this an opportunity to raise the discussion about raising the impact fees?

A: Right now, the County gets such minimal impact fees, however, the team can look at that once we see where the funding shortfall is. Impact fees can be mentioned as a potential revenue source.

Q: Does the County have impact districts?

A: The County has one impact district that spans the whole County. Impact fees are considered county wide.

C: Currently, the County only collects 10% from new development for transportation projects. We are shortchanging ourselves.

C: New developments are not responsible for off-site, system improvements associated with their projects.

The meeting was adjourned to review the project list and maps.