

ARC COMMITTEE MEETING FOLLOW-UP

ENVIRONMENT AND LAND USE COMMITTEE February 10, 2011 -- Meeting Notes

Members Present	Members Absent
Buzz Ahrens, Chair	Kerry Armstrong
BJ Mathis, Vice Chair	Kip Berry
Dennis Burnette	Ray Christman
Todd Ernst	Dan Davis
Gene Hatfield	Danny Lindsey
Bucky Johnson	Mark Mathews
Tad Leithead, Ex-Officio	Richard Oden
Ralph Moore	Dan Post
Narender Reddy	Mickey Thompson
Dave Sjoquist	
H. Lamar Willis	
Chick Krautler	

GENERAL

1. Welcome *Buzz Ahrens, Chair*

Chairman Ahrens noted that this was his last meeting as Chairman and that Rockdale County Chairman Richard Oden would be taking over as Chair next month.

2. Public Comment Period *Buzz Ahrens, Chair*

There was no public comment.

3. Approve January 13th Meeting Summaries *Buzz Ahrens, Chair*

Approved.

PLAN UPDATES

4. Review final PLAN 2040 DCA documents (First Read) *Dan Reuter, ARC*

- **Unified Growth Policy Map (UGPM)** – Consolidated local and regional land use policy.
http://www.atlantaregional.com/File%20Library/Land%20Use/Plan2040/lu_ugpm_nov_2010.pdf
- **Development Guide** - Description of UGPM areas and implementation measures.
http://www.atlantaregional.com/File%20Library/Land%20Use/LCI/lu_plan2040_developmentguide_10-28-2010.pdf
- **Local Performance Standards** - Minimum and Excellence performance thresholds for local governments to implement PLAN 2040.
http://www.atlantaregional.com/File%20Library/Land%20Use/Plan2040/lu_plan2040_local_govt_implementation_012011.pdf
- **Regional Partner Strategies** - Identified activities that non-governmental organizations and others will undertake.
http://www.atlantaregional.com/File%20Library/Land%20Use/Plan2040/lu_plan2040_regional_implementation_partners_012011.pdf
- **Five Year Work Program** - Activities ARC will seek to undertake to implement PLAN 2040 in the upcoming five year period.
http://www.atlantaregional.com/File%20Library/Land%20Use/Plan2040/lu_plan2040_implementation_program_012011.pdf

Dan Reuter provided an update on PLAN 2040 adoption process and provided the PLAN 2040 final documents to ELUC. Next month ARC will hold a public hearing and ELUC will transmit the Plan to the Commission and the Commission will transmit to DCA for approval. The Plan will stay draft until it is adopted by the Commission in July, and therefore tweaks and edits can still be made.

Judy Dovers in the Transportation Planning Division (TPD) provided an update on the public outreach effort to date for PLAN 2040, including the Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). Outreach has been conducted to three target groups – local government officials, stakeholders, and the general public. In 2010, the PLAN 2040 website had 10,300 hits, ARC held 220 separate stakeholder/local official and public meetings, and there were 1400 visits to the online public meetings with 200 participants completing surveys. In 2011, TPD staff met with local planners from every county, and will be reporting back to the stakeholders groups in March and holding an online public meeting. The final draft RTP and project lists will be reviewed in May and June prior to Commission adoption in July.

Chairman Ahrens asked if any comments from these stakeholder meetings were incorporated into PLAN 2040. Ms. Dovers responded that the key themes and major comments were incorporated, such as that the plan should focus on optimizing the existing infrastructure, rather than further expansion.

Mr. Reuter presented the proposed 5-year work program for the Land Use, Aging, Government Services, and Environmental Divisions. Jane Hayse presented the 5-year work program for Transportation and Mary Margaret Garrett for Workforce Development. (Draft 5-Yr Work Program and PowerPoint Presentation is included in the ELUC packets, and at the link above).

Mayor Johnson asked Ms. Hayse about the proposed freight planning and implementation program. Mayor Johnson said that a lot of truckers use GPS now and often end up off the truck route and in the middle of a downtown crossing railroad tracks, etc. Can this program help to address that problem? Ms. Hayse responded yes, through this program, local governments could adopt the truck route plan, communicate it to the industry possibly through dispatchers, install signage, etc. Mayor Johnson thought that the signage would not help much now that everyone uses GPS devices, but use of technology and dispatchers to communicate where trucks are supposed to go would help.

Dr. Hatfield asked Ms. Hayse what types of projects would be included in the proposed traffic operations and safety program? Ms. Hayse replied primarily low cost spot safety improvements, examples include guardrails, expanded shoulders, minor intersection realignments, pavement striping, etc. Dr. Hatfield asked if Ms. Hayse knew who monitors/oversees construction work sites, because they are often not well demarcated or signed which can be very dangerous for workers. Ms. Hayse responded that GDOT oversees construction on state or federal highways, and local government does for local roads.

Mr. Reuter presented the Local Government Performance Measures document. Local governments would need to meet the minimum standards within 3 years of adoption. ARC staff will provide technical assistance to the local governments to help them achieve the measures.

Chairman Ahrens asked what are consequences of not meeting the standards? Mr. Reuter stated that ARC will actively work with the local governments to ensure they meet the standards, however, if a local government does not meet the minimum (or advanced, if applicable) standard in three years, then the case will be presented to the ARC Commission which may then recommend to DCA the suspension of Qualified Local Government (QLG) status. Losing QLG status has implications for eligibility for state and local funds.

Mayor Moore commented on the use of an arbitrary population threshold as the criteria for determining if a local government had to meet the minimum or advanced standards. He explained that many rural towns with more than 5000 residents may have a difficult time meeting the standards, while some cities under 5000 population may be well staffed and have urban characteristics warranting the advanced measures. Mr. Reuter explained that it seems like a logical cut-off when looking at the towns that have staff and those that don't, but that 5,000 is arbitrary and any thoughts on how to deal with that are welcome. Dr. Hatfield noted that since small local governments will have access to ARC and County support and technical assistance, and given that the cumulative effects of these small cities could be quite impactful, that perhaps there shouldn't be such an exemption allowed. Mayor Johnson suggested that rather than an arbitrary threshold of 5000 population, that it would be left up to the community to submit a request to the ARC to opt down to the lower standard. Mr. Reuter said that the most important thing is the dialogue between ARC and the local governments and working with them to help them meet the standards.

Dr. Sjoquist raised the question of the future of the LCI program in PLAN 2040. It seems that the program has run its course (in its current form) and are there other ways to spend the money that are more transit-supportive, and/or to use the funds more broadly, and that we are running out of areas in the region that are appropriate for LCI. Mr. Reuter responded that we currently have 107 LCI areas, and there are approximately \$1 million per year available in planning funds. There continues to be a need for supplemental planning work to help implement the LCI plans – for example funds to draft overlay district zoning, 10-Yr updates, TOD studies, etc. The number of applications submitted for new LCI areas have been decreasing because there are few areas left that qualify (gone from 20+ applications to only 5 this year). On the construction side – there is still a tremendous need and benefit to LCI areas for sidewalks and other transportation improvements. Chick Krautler agreed that the current concept of LCI has pretty much run its course and recognizes that the program needs to change, ARC is now looking at targeting new/proposed transit sites, different criteria, also ARC may determine future centers for the LCI program rather than solicit applications. Dr. Sjoquist added that there are an abundance of struggling shopping centers throughout region, maybe there's a way to link those, create synergy through LCI.

Mayor Johnson asked about the funding for LCI, Mr. Reuter responded that there is approximately \$1 million per year for studies and \$20 million per year transportation projects through 2040 (\$500 million was set aside for LCI in Mobility 2030 – being extended to PLAN 2040) – currently about \$170 million has been programmed on transportation projects since 2003. Mayor Johnson stated that he supports the program and thinks the LCI plans are important to have in place to guide the infrastructure spending, but that some tweaks are needed.

DATA ITEMS

5. Regional Snapshot –*Small Area Regional Forecast*

Mike Alexander, ARC

Mike Alexander provided an overview of the February Regional Snapshot which focuses on the small area county level regional forecast (population, employment, traffic, etc). Chairman Leithead commended Mr. Alexander on his help providing data for a presentation that Chairman Leithead conducted in Henry County. He added that local governments find this information critical for their planning efforts. Mayor Moore asked if this information could be made available for the regional roundtable meetings. Mr. Alexander responded that these forecasts are the basis for the project list being considered by the roundtable. Dr. Hatfield noted that the projections for Clayton County are bleak – what can we do to turn this around? Mr. Reuter replied that he recently met with Clayton County Chairman Bell regarding using Clayton County as a pilot for programs addressing foreclosures and vacant properties. Narender Reddy added that while Gwinnett County has more foreclosures than Clayton, those properties haven't lost as much value – in Clayton County foreclosed houses are selling for as little as \$25,000. Chairman Ahrens commended Mike Carnathan for coming up to Cherokee County to present information from the regional snapshot.

REVIEWS OR SPECIAL STUDIES

6. 2010 Recap of DRIs: This item was postponed to a later meeting in the interest of time.

PLAN IMPLEMENTATION

7. Update on Implementation Task Force

Ralph Moore, Mayor, Union City

Mayor Moore summarized the efforts of the Implementation Task Force. They met three times and determined the primary activities that should be undertaken to implement Plan 2040:

- Develop regional performance measures for Plan 2040.
- Develop and maintain a “dashboard” and other communication tools (e.g. website, presentations, etc) to track project delivery.
- Evaluate annual work program and its outcomes, consider the use of logic models.

MEMBER INTRODUCED TOPICS

None

OTHER

None