

TSPLOST 2018 Program  
Prince Avenue Corridor Improvements: Project 16

User Group Meeting – Minutes  
June 23, 2021 9:00 A.M. - <https://youtu.be/rwDoj29drq4>

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**User Group Members Present:** Ellen Walker, Jeanne Connell, Emily Tatum, Jenn Rice, Mark Ebell, Stephen Bailey, Clint McCrory, Emily Tatum, Peter Norris, Ilka McConnell, Bruce Lonnee, Daniel Sizemore

**Members Absent:** Bruce Lonnee

**Other Staff Present:** Victor Pope, Forrest Huffman, Joseph D'Angelo, Mary Martin, Emilie Castillo, Gavin Hassemer, Brad McCook, Derek Doster, Keith Sanders, Diana Jackson

**Guests:** Sam Harris, Ernie Boughman, John Walker, Erik Hammarlund

**General Business**

Diana Jackson, called the meeting to order at 9:02 A.M., welcomed the members in attendance and thanked them for being present.

**Quorum:** Established quorum was present.

**User Group Actions**

Meeting Minutes Review & Approval – Clint McCrory made a motion to approve the edited May 26, 2021 Minutes and Ellen Walker seconded. The minutes were approved unanimously.

**The below is a brief summary of the key discussion items, not a transcript. The full video is available at the above noted YouTube link. The below notes are only to identify the items discussed and the general order of those discussion to make finding the information on the video easier.**

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**GDOT Prince Avenue Project Update**

Sam Harris, GDOT State Safety Engineer, gave an update of the Prince Ave project that originated as a road safety audit. Once the road passes the benefit cost ratio, it moves to a traffic engineering phase to make sure that improvements do not hamper operations/LOS. Then it moves into concept and it is given a PI number – meaning that the project is real, and funds tied to it. Then it moves into preliminary design and then final design. Currently, GDOT is in the beginning of preliminary engineering. Sam likes to get as much in “between the curbs” improvements completed right away. If you go outside the curbs, you’ll have to get right-of-way which will add a year. You’ll have to do an environmental study too which adds time.

He considers this as a mostly pedestrian safety driven project. At all signalized intersections there will be new ramps, pedestrian equipment – flashing yellow arrows or protected only left turns – countdown pedestrian heads, back plates, supplemental heads, ADA ramps throughout the corridor and striping improvements. Pedestrian crossings would be two-stage – with a median and a beacon, along with lighting improvements.

Mark asked about what GDOT plans to do to reduce average vehicular speed and reduce unsafe speeding. Sam said that GDOT’s goal is to reduce speed and conflict points. This is achieved through striping and medians, both of which have proven results. The medians will be used where there are pedestrian crossings.

Clint wanted to know the timing of the GDOT project, so that the UG's recommended improvements will be coordinated with GDOT's. Sam stated that GDOT is looking to "let" (bid) this project in FY2024. GDOT's FY2024 is 7/1/2023-6/30/2024. Diana asked the duration of this contract and Sam was unable to say. He said the material lead times are crazy right now, and he's not sure if they'll be better within a year.

Erik asked Sam about the proposed median between Oglethorpe and Satula Avenues and the hospital, and whether or not there will be anymore public outreach with the local businesses. He stated that public meetings are usually held during the concept phase. He will go back to the PM and check on that answer.

Diana asked Sam if there were traffic studies associated with these improvements. Sam says to be able to get a PI number, there absolutely would have to be a traffic study.

Stephen asked Sam what the minimum recommended lane width is for the corridor. Sam said it is based on functional class. He believes it might be 10 feet. He can confirm this. Stephen said that transit might push for 11 feet to meet their bus size needs. Stephen also asked about paving on both state and local maintained roadways. Sam said that originally this was a maintenance project, but since it has been assigned a PI, maintenance has left the project alone as it makes no sense for them to re-do only for a PI project to come through 2 years later.

Need to make sure that GDOT and ACCGov schedules align. Sam will make sure his PM reaches out to Stephen and Diana.

Diana asked that GDOT share their traffic studies with ACCGov. He is more than happy to share that data. He will ask his PM, Johnathan Dechko.

Daniel asked if the counts include bicycle counts. Sam said that when they do counts, they make sure to pickup bicycle, pedestrian as well as vehicular. Sam also said that if his data counts are too old, he would work with ACCGov to collect additional data.

## **Unused Utility Poles TPW Update**

Brad McCook, Utility Coordinator, has been researching utility poles along the corridor. He has been in touch with Georgia Power Company and ATT about the poles. It appears promising that they may be able to clean up the double poles. He stated that it might be accomplished with 1-2 years, maybe even 6 months. The UG has been assigned homework to develop a list/map of poles they might want removed.

## **Results from the June 8<sup>th</sup> Work Session**

Diana asked the UG if they'd had a chance to view or review the Work Session (as it is taped). Clint had a comment about scheduling. He feels like we have overpromised what we might be able to tell the M&C by September. Keith responded that the UG can push it to a later Work Session if that's what the User Group needs. Clint wondered again what the timing for traffic studies is. Diana stated that she has already asked Benesch and Kimley Horn for a proposal for conducting traffic studies knowing what we already have; however, if GDOT has data, that might change. Erik stated that he and John have developed a high end and a low end for traffic analysis for the non-state route of the corridor, but that they might want to wait to see what Sam may be able to provide. He did state that the timing for the data needs to be after school is back in session August-September. The consultants could bring TE studies back to us in October-November. The UG could have some smaller projects that could be approved conceptually when we provide the M&C the prioritized list of projects.

Diana stated that the SPLOST and PIO developed a response to the Flagpole Article written following the work session.

Keith wanted to make sure that the UG understands that the next TSPLOST 2023 is out for project submissions. The submission form is below:

[https://accsplosttest.formstack.com/forms/tsplost2023\\_project\\_submission](https://accsplosttest.formstack.com/forms/tsplost2023_project_submission)

Stephen stated that it would probably be better if it came from the UG as his staff is pretty busy with submissions of their own that are due July 28<sup>th</sup> for ACCGov staff generated, and August 15<sup>th</sup> for public generated. He stated that they may be able to support the UG.

Keith stated that the UG might want to include the Park/Talmadge Intersection Improvement as a specific project. He said that it's a mixed bag if you give a specific project or a bucket of money. Diana asked if we could not submit both? Keith said that is certainly possible.

Both Clint and Jen stated that they really don't have a handle on what things are going to cost, and how best to allocate budget within the list of prioritized projects. Diana stated that the UG can work with the engineering consultants to come up with an order of magnitude costs - cost per foot for bike lanes and conceptual cost for the intersection improvements. It may be \$, \$\$, \$\$\$, \$\$\$\$ rather than assign a cost. It will really vary depending on ROW acquisition costs, etc.

### **Update from Public Engagement Subcommittee**

Emilie went through a current status of the survey and story maps. She asked the UG for assistance with content for the survey. She will email a list of needed things to the UG subset. Peter, Ellen, and Emily offered to assist. As far as the graphics, the group discussed options, but they decided that perhaps just showing a blue line or icon on the aerial might be more representative of what we are trying to identify rather than give a false sense of what it might look alike along with a caveat that final location TBD following TE studies. Ilka and Ellen volunteered to take a few photos of the mid-block crossings for the UG to see to make a final determination for photos. They also offered to gather information on the utility poles along the corridor.

The PE subcommittee agreed to meet on July 1<sup>st</sup> from 1:00-2:30 pm.

### **Project Schedule**

Next step is for the Public Engagement subcommittee to work with GIO staff to develop one category of the survey.

### **Assignment for future meetings**

- Next meeting is **July 7, 2021 from 9-10:30 am**
- Public Engagement subcommittee updates
- TSPLOST 2023 project submission forms
- Blue medians – ACCGov's Stormwater staff
- Update from GDOT – Erik Hammarlund, Benesch

*These minutes are not a transcript of the meeting but instead is a general summary of the key points, ideas, or considerations from the discussion.*