

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY

January 30, 2012

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on January 30, 2012 at 10:01 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6th Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

Board Members Present

Robert L. Ashe, III
Wendy Butler, Chair
Frederick L. Daniels, Jr.
Jim Durrett
Roderick E. Edmond
Noni Ellison Southall
Barbara Babbit Kaufman
Adam Orkin

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Theodore Basta, Jr. (Acting); AGMs Davis Allen, Joseph Dorsey (Acting), Johnny Dunning, Jr. (Acting), Ben Graham, Georgetta Gregory, Robin Howard, Mary Ann Jackson, Barbara Kirkland (Acting), Rich Krisak, Ryland McClendon, Elizabeth O'Neill and Gary Pritchett; Sr. Directors Rhonda Briggins and Kevin Hurley; Directors Lowell (Rip) Detamore, Reginald Diamond, Garry Free, Donna Jennings, Walter Jones, Jennifer Jinadu-Wright, Carol Smith and Elvin Tobin; Managers Emmett Crockett, Vicki Dewberry, Donna DeJesus, Roosevelt Stripling, Gregory Synderman, Robert H. Thomas, Denise Whitfield, Donald Williams. Executive Manager to the Board Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Sr. Executive Administrator Tyra J. Wiltz; Executive Administrator Renee Willis, Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid. Others in attendance Cecil Banks, Doug Chambers, Jolanda Crane, Jonnie Keith, Josh Piermarini, Anthony Pines, Janide Sidifall, Dansby Wade and Zaheer Wadhwania.

Also in attendance Charles Pursley, Jr. of Pursley of Pursley, Lowery & Meeks; Alex Crowson of MATC; William Jones of City of Atlanta; Paul Jones.

Approval of the November 28, 2011 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

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

Resolution Authorizing Service Modifications for the April 2012 Mark-Up

Mr. Crockett presented this resolution for Board of Directors approval authorizing service modifications to bus routes 1, 12, 86 and 115.

The proposed modifications were presented for community feedback at Public Hearings conducted in the City of Atlanta on January 24, 2012 and DeKalb County on January 26, 2012. Public Hearing feedback was considered in staff recommendations to approve the route modifications.

Mrs. Briggins presented results of the Public Hearings as follows:

Public Hearings were held on January 24, 2012 at Atlanta City Hall, City of Atlanta and January 26, 2012 at Maloof Auditorium in DeKalb County.

Three (3) people attended the Hearing at Atlanta City Hall, two (2) of which made public comments. Also in attendance were eleven (11) MARTA Board/Staff and one (1) local media.

Eight (8) people attended the Public Hearing at Maloof Auditorium, DeKalb County – three (3) made public comments. Also in attendance were twelve (12) MARTA Board/Staff. No media attended the Hearing at Maloof Auditorium.

Two (2) Public Comments were received via email concerning the proposed service modifications. One email was in opposition to Route 115; the other opposing Route 32.

The proposed route modifications do not increase service miles and hours and therefore will not increase FY 2012 budgeted service costs. Upon approval, the modifications will become effective with the April 2012 Mark-Up.

On motion by Mr. Daniels seconded by Mr. Orkin, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 6 to 0, with 6 members present.

Briefing - Reduced Service Plan September 2010 - September 2011

Mr. Crockett briefed the Committee on the results of MARTA's Reduced Service Plan implemented in September 2010.

Planning Context

- **Entering FY2011, MARTA faced a \$120M Operating Budget shortfall**
- **Planning staff developed a Reduced Service Plan as means of reducing costs**
- **Approach to Plan Development**
 - **Start from scratch then rebuild bus network**
 - **Retain highest passenger activity**
 - **Meet service cost reduction targets**
 - **Extensively engage community in plan development**
 - **Develop framework for future service adjustments**

Planning Guiding Principles

- **Maximize ridership**
- **Ensure access to critical activity centers/facilities**
- **Comply with Federal regulations and mandates**
- **Maintain jurisdictional service equity**
- **Minimize adverse Paratransit impacts**
- **Establish safe, convenient, reliable and sustainable core service**

The Reduced Service Plan

- **Reduced Bus service hours by 10.2%**
- **Reduced weekday bus routes from 131 to 91 (31%)**
 - **114 to 86 Saturday routes (25%)**
 - **109 to 84 Sunday routes (23%)**
- **Restructured 80% of remaining routes**
- **Established Core Service**
- **Anticipated rate of Ridership retention**
 - **Weekday – 85.6%**
 - **Saturday – 88.7%**
 - **Sunday – 83.2%**

How is MARTA doing?

- **Anticipated system adjustments**
 - From December 2012 to September 2011, staff implemented 79 service modifications to 60 of the 91 routes (66%)
 - Adjustments were possible by a 5% contingency in the FY11 Operating Budget
 - Implemented an additional service Mark-up (June 2010) to address customer impacts
- **Favorable trends in four Key Service Productivity Measures**
 - Increase in passengers per mile, passengers per hour and farebox recovery – slight decrease in subsidy per passenger
- **Higher passenger retention due to:**
 - Dissemination of high volumes of information advising customers of service changes
 - Continuous monitoring and evaluating and adjustments to the new route network

Service Assessment Process

- **A comparative measure of service productivity using industry-standard performance metrics**
 - Conducted for every service Mark-up
 - Service days
 - Service types (Feeder, Local, Semi-Express, Peak Hour Only)
- **Performance metrics include:**
 - Passengers per Hour
 - Passengers per Mile
 - Subsidy per Passenger (\$)
 - Farebox Recovery (%)
- **Individual Routes are compared to category average (service type, day of week)**
- **Routes performing less than 50% of the category average "Fail" the associated measure**
- **Routes "Failing" three or more measures are labeled deficient (low-performing)**

Service Adjustments

- **Address Safety Concerns**
 - Adjustments to improve sight distance, re-route to minimize rail road crossing and eliminate hazardous turning movements
- **Relieve Overcrowding – Based on MARTA's Service Standards**
 - A trip is overcrowded when the load factor exceeds 1.5 of the seating capacity on a bus; e.g., 60 passengers on a 40-seat bus
- **Re-Route/Modify Service**
 - Minimize distance to/from service; improving accessibility for senior citizens
- **Route Running Time/Service Frequencies**
 - Adjustments to restructured routes to ensure adequate time to operate service safely and reliably
 - Adjustments that balance service reliability with customer convenience
- **Improve On-Time Performance (OTP)**
 - Adjustments to improve schedule adherence
 - FY12 System-Wide On-Time Performance target is 75%

Ridership is exceeding projections.

- **Weekdays:** Retaining 89% of passengers vs. projected 85%
- **Saturdays:** Retaining 92% of passengers vs. projected 88%
- **Sundays:** Retaining 90% of passengers vs. projected 83%

All four Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) have improved.

- **Average Passengers Per Revenue Mile**
 - Weekdays increased from 2.48 to 2.70 Passengers per Revenue Mile
 - Saturdays increased from 2.18 to 2.44 Passengers per Revenue Mile
 - Sundays increased from 1.85 to 1.94 Passengers per Revenue Mile

- **Average Passengers Per Revenue Hour**
 - Weekdays increased from 29.24 to 31.29 Passengers per Revenue Hour
 - Saturdays increased from 26.93 to 29.55 Passengers per Revenue Hour
 - Sundays increased from 22.93 to 23.39 Passengers per Revenue Hour
- **Average Farebox Recovery**
 - Weekdays increased from 13.8% to 15.5%
 - Saturdays increased from 13.6% to 15.0%
 - Sundays increased from 11.4% to 12.0%
- **Average Subsidy Per Passenger**
 - Weekdays improved from \$5.07 to \$4.49
 - Saturdays improved from \$5.15 to \$4.76
 - Sundays improved from \$6.37 to \$6.22

Next Steps

- **Ongoing service monitoring, evaluation and refining**
 - Relieve overcrowding
 - Customer service reports overloads on Routes 5, 39 and 49
 - Address safety concerns
 - Improve On-Time Performance
 - OTP reports 35 routes operating below the 75% OTP target
 - Provide convenient access to route (for Seniors)
 - Facilitate convenient bus-to-rail and rail-to-bus connectivity
- **Resource Considerations**
 - Additional 2-3% requested under FY13 Operating Budget to maintain service quality and sustain the favorable trends on ridership and OTP
 - Buses needed for additional service
 - Resources that can be transferred from unproductive service

Mr. Ashe asked about service adjustments to improve On-Time Performance.

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Mr. Crockett explained too much or too little time allocated from point A to B, load factors and traffic conditions all lead to service adjustments to improve On-Time Performance.

Mr. Ashe said those adjustments to the schedule reflect what is actually happening.

Mr. Crockett said that is correct.

Mr. Daniels asked about the service modifications to address safety concerns.

Mr. Crockett said safety issues are modified immediately. He explained instances where re-routes are done to minimize railroad crossings or to eliminate hazardous turns.

Mrs. Southall asked is 75% On-Time Performance the industry standard.

Mr. Crockett said it is MARTA's standard.

Mrs. Southall asked what is the industry standard.

Mr. Dunning said staff would need to research.

Mrs. Southall said she interested to know the industry standard and the standards that other agencies have set.

Mr. Crockett added that MARTA's former On-Time Performance target was 73%. MARTA is consistently raising its goal. Most systems track their On-Time Performance over time and use that information to set a target.

Mr. Basta said very few systems rely on APC and AVL in establishing On-Time Performance goals. In that type of calculation a 75% target is very high. Manually, goals can be over 80% but the data is not accurate.

Mrs. Southall asked what the increase in Ridership can be attributed to.

Mr. Crockett said a combination of an exhaustive community input effort, savvy riders, customer information from External Relations and fine-tuning of the service.

Mr. Daniels asked if MARTA is still within the five-percent (5%) budgeted for adjustments.

Mr. Dunning said although the 5% has been used, the Authority has stayed steady for Fiscal Year 2012. MARTA has reached a point fiscally where it can only focus on quality not expansion.

Briefing - GA 400 North Line Alternatives Analysis

Mr. Williams briefed the Committee on the GA 400 North Line Alternative Analysis.

Study Purpose

- This study was started in September 2010 to examine options for extending high capacity transit service in the GA 400 North Line Corridor

Project Development Process

- MARTA's Project Development Process typically follows the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) New Starts Planning Process
 - The New Starts project development process may be broken down into five key phases:
 - System Planning
 - Alternatives Analysis
 - Preliminary Engineering
 - Final Design
 - Full Funding Grant Agreement
 - The Alternatives Analysis phase – the primary focus is identification of a Locally Preferred transit Alternative:
 - Mode
 - Alignment

Public/Agency Outreach

- Committee Structure
- Stakeholder Interviews
- TAC Kickoff Meeting
- SAC Kickoff Meeting
- Public Meeting #1: Input on Goals
- TAC Meeting #2

Study Area

- **Study Area extends from I-285 to McGinnis Ferry Road**
- **Study Area Jurisdictions**
 - **Sandy Springs**
 - **Dunwoody**
 - **Roswell**
 - **Mountain Park**
 - **Alpharetta**
 - **Milton**
 - **Johns Creek**
 - **DeKalb and Fulton Counties**
- **Adjacent Jurisdictions**
 - **Forsyth**
 - **Atlanta**
 - **Gwinnett and Cobb Counties**

Why GA 400?

- **North Fulton County is one of the fastest growing sub-regions in the Atlanta region**
- **North Fulton formerly functioned as a bedroom community to downtown Atlanta, but is increasingly functioning as a regional employment center**
- **Project will provide opportunity to link neighborhoods and activity centers along the GA 400 corridor**
- **Provides opportunity for Transit Oriented Development**
- **Improves transit service to residential and business areas**

Previous Transportation Studies

- **MARTA Three Corridors Study – 1998**
- **MARTA North Line Alternatives Analysis – 2003**
- **MARTA North Line TOD Study – 2006**
- **Concept 3 Transit Vision – 2008**
- **Georgia Statewide Strategic Transportation Plan – 2010**
- **North Fulton Comprehensive Transportation Plan – 2010**
- **Plan 2040 Regional Transportation Plan – 2011**
- **Strategic Regional Thoroughfare Plan – 2011**

- **Draft ATL Northside Strategy – 2011**
- **I-285 Alternatives Analysis/Draft EIS – Ongoing**

Corridor Highlights

- **The North Fulton Chamber of Commerce website provides the following description of cities located in the GA 400 Corridor. North Fulton has six distinct cities, each with its own style:**
 - **Alpharetta – pro-business attitude**
 - **Johns Creek – home of the 2011 PGA Championship**
 - **Milton – known for its beautiful horse farms**
 - **Mountain Park – rural community nestled in North Fulton**
 - **Roswell – small business, recreation and cultural hub**
 - **Sandy Springs – vibrant business center**
- **2010 Population for North Fulton Cities (ARC): 395,953**
 - **Alpharetta – 57,551**
 - **Johns Creek – 76,728**
 - **Milton – 32,661**
 - **Roswell – 88,346**
 - **Dunwoody – 46,267**
 - **Sandy Springs – 93,853**
 - **Mountain Park – 547**
- **Top Employers (North Fulton Chamber of Commerce)**
 - **Northside Hospital**
 - **AT&T**
 - **State Farm**
 - **ADP, Inc.**
 - **St. Joseph's Hospital**
 - **Children's Healthcare of Atlanta**
 - **McKesson Provider Technologies**
- **Population Trends**
 - **2000 to 2010 Growth – 22% increase**
 - **2010 to 2040 Forecast – 10% increase**
 - **Concentrated near Holcomb Bridge and Sandy Springs along GA 400**
- **Employment Trends**
 - **2000 to 2009 Growth – 1% decrease**

- 2010 to 2040 Forecast – 49% increase
- Concentrated near Perimeter Center
- Employment growth is more rapid than population – 10% versus 49%
- Travel Demand
 - Increase employment and population will result in increased travel demand
 - Opportunity to attract new transit riders

Corridor Stakeholders

- Regional and State Agencies
 - Atlanta Regional Commission
 - Georgia Department of Transportation
 - Georgia Regional Transportation Authority
 - State Road and Toll Authority
- Businesses/Business Groups
 - North Fulton Chamber of Commerce
 - Latin American Association
 - Korean Chamber of Commerce
 - North Fulton CID
 - Perimeter CID
 - Georgia State University
 - Hospitals
 - Major Employers
- Local Jurisdictions
 - Fulton County
 - DeKalb County
 - Forsyth County
 - Alpharetta
 - Milton
 - Roswell
 - Mountain Park
 - Sandy Springs
 - Johns Creek
 - Dunwoody
 - Atlanta

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- **Citizens Groups**
 - **Neighborhood Associations**
 - **Perimeter Transportation and Sustainability Coalition**

Current Status

- **Project Team Kickoff Meeting – September 2011**
- **Technical Advisory Committee Meeting – December 13, 2011**
- **Completed Project Management Plan**
- **Finalizing Existing Conditions Report**
- **Stakeholder Interviews – December 2011 - January 2012**
- **SAC Meetings – January 2012**
- **Public Meetings – January 2012**

Project Schedule

- **Winter 2011**
 - **Goals and Objectives**
 - **Purpose and Need**
 - **Existing Conditions**
- **Spring 2012**
 - **Develop Alternative Evaluation Methodology**
 - **Definition of Alternatives**
 - **Refine Ridership Model**
- **Summer - Fall 2012**
 - **Evaluation of Alternative**
 - **Identify Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)**
- **Winter 2012/2013**
 - **Develop Financial Plan**
 - **Develop Implementation Plan**
- **Spring 2013**
 - **Final AA Report**

Next Steps

- **Continuation of Stakeholders Interviews**

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- **Completion of Existing Conditions Report**
- **Development of Evaluation Methodology**
- **Development of Alternatives**

Mr. Daniels asked about an older study that did not support rail.

Mr. Williams said the study conducted in 2003 did not support rail at that time which is why the TOD study was conducted in 2006.

Mr. Dunning said implementation never occurred. The FTA did not agree with how the study was conducted.

Mr. Daniels asked about future growth.

Mr. Williams said growth is possible all the way to Forsyth, Gwinnett and Cobb.

Mr. Daniels asked what is the timing for New Starts.

Mr. Dunning said on average, ten years.

Other Matters

Mrs. McClendon provided the following information regarding external events:

- **The upcoming Transit Governance Meeting has been cancelled**
- **A Press Conference with DOT Secretary Ray LaHood on the Atlanta Streetcar will be held on February 1, 2012 at 11:00 am**

Mrs. McClendon announced that Johnny Dunning, Sr. Director of Transit System Planning has accepted an opportunity at North County Transit District (NCTD) in Southern California. Friday, February 10th will serve as Mr. Dunning's last day at MARTA.

Mrs. Butler, on behalf of the Board of Directors, congratulated Mr. Dunning and stated that he will be greatly missed.

Adjournment

The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 10:57 a.m.