

MINUTES
MEETING OF THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS
PLANNING & EXTERNAL RELATIONS COMMITTEE
METROPOLITAN ATLANTA RAPID TRANSIT AUTHORITY
January 8, 2015

The Board of Directors Planning & External Relations Committee met on January 8, 2015 at 10:33 a.m. in the Board Room on the 6th Floor of the MARTA Headquarters Building, 2424 Piedmont Road, Atlanta, Georgia.

Board Members Present

Harold Buckley, Sr.
Roderick E. Edmond
Noni Ellison-Southall, *Chair*
Freda B. Hardage
Christopher Tomlinson*

MARTA officials in attendance were: General Manager/ CEO Keith T. Parker, AICP; Chief Operating Officer David Springstead (Acting); Chief of Staff Rukiya Eaddy; Chief Administrative Officer Edward L. Johnson; Chief Financial Officer Gordon Hutchinson; Chief Counsel Elizabeth O'Neill; AGMs, Wanda Dunham, Kelly Hayden (Acting), Robin Henry, Ming Hsi, Reginald Mason, Ryland McClendon and Terry Thompson; Executive Director Ferdinand Risco; Sr. Director Amanda Rhein; Directors Joel T. Larkins, Sharma Ravi (Acting) and Carol Smith; Managers Mark Eatman, Alisa Jackson and Janide Sidifall; Manager, Executive Office Administration Tyrene L. Huff; Executive Manager to the Board Rebbie Ellisor-Taylor; Finance Administrative Analyst Tracy Kincaid. Others in attendance Davis Allen, Nicholas Gowens, Don Lawrence, Saba Long, Srinath Remala, Antoine Smith, Hoki Tse and Dansby Wade.

Also in attendance Pam Alexander of LTK Engineering; Claudia Bilotta of Parsons Brinckerhoff; Harry Boxler of GDOT; Jack Buckingham of MATC; David Centofanti of Northridge Community Association; John Crocker of JTC Analytics; Chuck Deeb of T.Y. Lin International; Olivia Ibrahim of Progress Partners; David Knotts of FCBE; Johnathan Lewis of City of Atlanta; Gerald Oberholtzer of Forsyth County; Kristin Rome of NFCID; Chip Swearngan of Somerset HOA.

*Mr. Tomlinson is Executive Director of Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA) and is therefore a non-voting member of the MARTA Board of Directors

Consent Agenda

- a. Approval of the December 4, 2014 Planning & External Relations Committee Meeting Minutes

On motion by Dr. Edmond seconded by Mrs. Hardage, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved by a vote of 3 to 0, 4* members present.

Individual Agenda

Resolution Authorizing the General Manager to Implement Ridership Incentives

Mrs. McClendon presented this resolution for Board of Directors' approval authorizing the General Manager/CEO to initiate pilot programs to encourage the use of the MARTA system by designating fare incentives such as a customer loyalty program, employee family pass, fare promotional programs and a free fare time period.

Tasks

- Conduct Transit Equity Analysis (EA) as required
- Conduct Surveys to gather data for analysis
- Conduct Employee Focus Groups
- Review EA and develop mitigation plan and alternatives if needed
- Conduct Financial Analysis
- Define Fare System Technical Requirements
- Community Outreach & Public Hearings

New Fare Proposals

- Holiday Group Pass
- Transit Ridership Incentives

Holiday Group Pass

- Four One Day Breeze Tickets for \$28.00/\$6 fare + \$1 fare media cost = \$7.00 per ticket (33% discount off regular fare)

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- Purchase a minimum of 2 (two) up to 5 (five) tickets
- Does not have to be a traditional family
- Information Technology will program the fare system for specific dates – media will only be accepted for that specific date
- Passes can be purchased beginning 3 (three) days prior to the specific holiday and the day of
- Fare Equity Analysis required
- Research & Analysis will conduct 4 (four) holiday surveys to gather data: New Year's Day, Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Labor Day and Thanksgiving (day after) Friday
- Suggested Holidays
 - New Year's Day
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Day
 - Memorial Day
 - Labor Day
 - Thanksgiving (day after) Friday

MARTA Loyalty Program

- When patrons register their Breeze Card it will become a rewards card
- Patrons earn points each time the card is tapped to enter a rail station or to board a bus
- Starbucks model – include an app that shows status of points, can accept promo codes sent to patrons via text or email offer double points on certain days, at off-peak times, for specific routes and stations
- Points could be redeemed at Breeze Vending Machines (MVMs) for:
 - Free or discounted fare
 - Passes for friends and family members
 - Coupons for local businesses (retailers, events, aquarium, Uber)
- Could also offer Breeze Card lotteries from time to time with MARTA fare as reward; any registered card holder would be eligible to win
- Develop comparable programs for TMAs and for MARTA employees the "MARTA Passport Reward"

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- Patrons who achieve a certain number of points could become eligible for a Gold Breeze Card – a Gold Card would offer additional discounts plus other ridership "perks" such as a free beverage from station vending and personalized cards with patrons' photos

Chance Based Rewards

- Launch and promote Breeze Card drawings and door prizes to motivate card registration
- Reach out to Clayton County with drawings of registered Breeze Card numbers
- 'Every "nth" customer who taps to enter a station wins a free monthly pass; must be using a registered card to Win
- Turn BVMs into "slot machines":
 - Random prizes printed on the back of receipts
 - Also print coupons from local businesses on BVM receipts
- Bus operators give away one-day passes to every "nth" rider who taps a registered card on the farebox
- Encourage patrons to try out new routes by mailing or emailing coupons for free or discounted fare on certain routes
- Golden Ticket Program during Holiday Season
 - BVMs will randomly dispense Golden Tickets that can be redeemed for free fare or for other types of prizes; other smaller rewards included as well

Referral/New Rider Program

- A discount program where a current patron can purchase a second pass at a discount or free
 - Establish "Refer a Friend Day" with a buy one/get one free deal
 - Discounted passes for large groups of people traveling together
 - TMA representatives could organize group travel events and arrange to meet with groups for a trip – travel training out on the system
 - Corporate scavenger hunts on MARTA, organized by TMAs

- Offer referral incentives to current patrons with registered Breeze Cards
 - Discounts for making a referral
 - New referral would need to register card and identify the patron who referred them
 - Discounts would increase as the number of referrals increased

Specialty Cards for Events and Attractions

- Offer Specialty Breeze Cards that Offer Fare Plus Discounts Related to Specific Destinations
 - For example, a Six Flags card could be used to receive discounts on food and beverages in the park, or
 - a Falcons card could have the season schedule printed on the back and offer similar discounts
- Cards would have a customized look and would be souvenir items
- Could be expanded to have university cards to purchase items on campus
- Breeze Card could become a multi-use card for fare and other debit purchases
- Also include Breeze Card as a part of the City Pass

Free Fare Time

- For a set time period (2 hours or less), MARTA would offer to all customers a free ride on the trains and buses

Mrs. Ellison-Southall applauded staff efforts. She said this exemplifies great leadership and creativity.

Dr. Edmond asked if staff gathered information from other agencies.

Ms. Smith said staff did a benchmark on initiatives and had discussions with other agencies. Staff found that some of the Authority's ideas are similar to what other agencies are doing and/or considering.

Mrs. McClendon said Research & Analysis has presented a lot of ideas. This presentation is to give the Committee an overview of the pilot programs staff would like to create.

Dr. Edmond asked how often would MARTA offer free fare time.

Mr. Parker said free fare time would be infrequent and likely offered during instances of very low ridership. For example, during inclement weather or ozone alert days MARTA really wants to incentivize ridership and Board Members will be notified.

Dr. Edmond said he liked the idea but would like to know the costs for MARTA.

Mr. Parker said the costs can be quantified.

Mrs. Ellison-Southall commented that a free fare time would not be offered on high revenue days.

Mr. Parker said that is correct – it would be offered on days when ridership is weak.

On motion by Mrs. Hardage seconded by Mr. Buckley, the resolution was unanimously approved by a vote of 4 to 0, with 5* members present.

Briefing – Connect 400 Transit Initiative Update

Mr. Eatman briefed the Committee on the progress and status of the Connect 400 (GA 400) Transit Initiative and recommended a LPA for Board consideration.

Background

- Current study effort started in 2011
- Completed Alternatives Analysis (2013)
 - Assessed a variety of alignments and technologies
 - Extensive community outreach
- Initiated Early Scoping Phase 1 (Fall 2013)
 - Identified GA 400 as the corridor of focus
 - Advanced HRT, BRT and LRT for further consideration
- Continued Early Scoping Phase 2 (2014)
 - Additional community outreach

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- Eliminated LRT – Advance HRT and BRT
- Concern of GA 400 east vs. west side alignment options

Community Outreach

- Stakeholder Meetings
- Public Meetings
- Surveys

Feedback

- HRT is the best performing alternative and preferred technology by stakeholders and the public
- Concern over future alignment – East vs. West side of GA 400
- Preference for a "one seat ride"
- Willingness to pay more for HRT service and its benefits
- HRT and BRT ranked highest in New Starts evaluation
- Desire from the community to see MARTA and GDOT coordinate

Project Status

- Re-initiated efforts in Spring of 2014 to:
 - Conduct a second phase of Early Scoping
 - Initiate the preliminary New Starts evaluation
 - Recommend/adopt a LPA
 - Begin environmental documentation (DEIS) (Begins in Winter 2015)

Background on Analysis for LPA Identification

- Tasked by MARTA management to conduct additional analysis of potential:
 1. Environmental Impacts (quantitative)
 2. Transportation Impacts (qualitative)
 3. Costs (order of magnitude costs based on planning-level assumptions)

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- The LPA will define:
 - Technology advanced into the DEIS
 - Refined alignment studied in the DEIS

Alternatives Considered

- East Only HRT
- East Only BRT
- West Only HRT
- West Only BRT
- East-West-East HRT
- East-West-East BRT
- BRT in Managed Lanes
 - Assumes Joint GDOT/MARTA Implementation

Analysis Process (conducted September – November 2014)

- Data Collection
- GIS Base Mapping
- Refine Alignments
- Crossover Identification
- Station Footprints
- Site Selection
- Right-of-Way (ROW) Assumptions
- Impact/Assessment Costs
- Conclusions

Evaluation Criteria

- Transportation Impacts
 - Accessibility / network impacts
 - Population / employment access

- Proximity to attractors
- Consistency with existing plans / Early Scoping feedback
- Environmental Impacts
 - Displacements
 - Wetlands
 - Parklands
 - Community facilities
 - Environmental Justice
- Capital Costs

Refinements in Evaluation since Alternatives Analysis

- * Alternatives Analysis (Previous) → Current Analysis (New)
 - Generalized station location → Station footprint located for purpose of impact analysis
 - Standard station cost → Station footprints, type and parking structures included
 - Standard structures cost → Major/Minor structure assumptions based on length and typical section
 - Total land acquisition cost → Land acquisition costs based on land value at footprint location and typical section width
 - 5% Cost contingency → 30% Cost contingency (based on professional experience for planning level assumptions)
 - 2012 Costs → Year of expenditure costs (2028 assumed)
 - GDOT Managed Lane information not included → GDOT Managed Lane information included

Evaluation Key Findings

- Crossovers add about a 1%-2% increase to total project cost
- HRT alignments are approximately 2.5 times the cost of their corresponding BRT alignment; impacts are similar
- East-West-East Alternatives have the lowest level of impacts

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- BRT Managed Lane alternative has lower cost but high impact due to anticipated right of way requirements (based on GA 400 Managed Lanes Feasibility Study)
- Availability of GA 400 ROW from GDOT is uncertain based on existing and future managed lane plans for the corridor

MARTA Staff Recommended LPA

- East-West-East HRT
 - \$2.1 - \$2.2B
 - Least impacts
 - Community preferred
- Other Alternatives for Study in DEIS
 - East-West-East BRT
 - \$880M - \$1B
 - Minimal impacts
 - Preferred alignment alternative
 - BRT in GDOT Managed lanes
 - Approximately \$520M
 - High impacts → Managed Lane footprint
 - Potential coordination with GOOT
 - No Build

Rationale for Selecting the LPA

- Strongest Support from planning partners and general public
- One seat ride → High ridership
- Natural extension of existing red line
- Supports land use, economic development and future investment goals adopted by local communities and planning partners
- Performs well against preliminary FTA New Starts criteria
- Minimizes environmental and community impacts

Next Steps

- Finalize LPA recommendation for MARTA Board – January 2015
- Recommended LPA to the MARTA Board – February 2015
- Initiate Draft EIS – March 2015

Mrs. Ellison-Southall said although she is concerned about the dollar amount she is supportive of the project. She added that it will be very important to remain as cost effective as possible as the project moves forward.

Briefing – MARTA Midtown Station Proposed Modifications

Mr. Sharma and Ms. Rhein briefed the Committee on the latest concepts for the Midtown Station modifications as proposed by Midtown Alliance.

Midtown Alliance Goals

- To make Midtown a premier destination for commerce, culture, education and living
- Focus on initiatives to improve safety and the physical environment
- Transform Midtown into a true mixed-use, live-learn-work-play community

MARTA & Midtown Alliance

- MARTA has three stations located in the Midtown area: Arts Center, Midtown and North Avenue
- MARTA appreciates the opportunity Midtown Alliance has extended in proposing improvements in the environs of each the stations to foster netter connectivity through improved transit facilities
- MARTA is thrilled to partner with Midtown Alliance in facilitation mutually beneficial design enhancements

Planning Efforts

- At the end of 2013, Midtown Alliance completed a planning effort with MARTA's participation that defined strategies that enhanced all MARTA station within the Midtown Improvement District (MID)

- MID – a self-taxing organization created by Midtown commercial property owners to augment public resources and spur economic growth in Midtown
- The intent was to improve those concepts during 2014 by seeking LCI implementation funds through ARC
- As Midtown Alliance refined the original ideas, a new concept was developed for Midtown Station

Midtown Station Enhancement Proposal

- 10th Street Entry Plaza
 - Granite Plaza Pavement – banding patterns parallel to 10th street
 - Benches – granite benches with embedded LED lights
 - Greenspace – rectangular landscape bands
 - Sculpture – landmark to entryway
 - Pedestrian Lights – illuminating columns, accent lights, etc.
- Station Interior and Facades at Street Level Main Concourse
 - Painted Murals by local artists, located in exterior recessed corners
 - Concrete Stain – lighten and brighten interior ceiling and certain walls
 - Information Signage – digital monitors broadcast real time transit info
 - Projection – project images on adjacent building or entry plazas
 - Floor Paint – pedestrian traffic coating
 - Lighting – colored glass, LED wall washers and spotlights
 - Color – colored fabric acoustic panels and colored panels of transparent glass
 - Audio to improve announcement clarity, play music
- Peachtree Place Entry Plaza
 - Granite Plaza Pavement
 - Benches
 - Greenspace

- Pedestrian Lights
- Painted Crosswalk
- Transit Tower – digital monitors to display live transit schedule
- ADA Parallel Parking along north side of Peachtree Place
- Shuttle and Vehicle Loading Zone along north side of Peachtree Place
- Shade Structure for shuttle/vehicle drop off area
- Pocket Park
 - Demolish Parking Lot and convert to active urban pocket park
 - Granite Plaza Pavement
 - Seating Area – Tech Trolley waiting, monolithic granite benches with embedded LED lights
 - Furniture Shade Structures – integrated lights and charging stations powered by photovoltaic roof panels
 - Vegetative Screen Fence
 - Collaborative Seats and Tables
 - Container Cafés – seating area to anchor both ends of the new pocket park
 - Movable Seats and Tables
 - Greenspace
 - Pedestrian Lights

Briefing – Bus OTP Update

Ms. Smith provided the Committee an update on Bus On-Time Performance (OTP).

Bus OTP Trend

- Bus On-Time Performance (OTP) increased 7.3% in FY15 compared to FY11
- Currently, OTP for the month of October was 79.4%, exceeding the target of 78%

Factors Impacting OTP

- Changes in scheduling parameters
- Varying traffic conditions
- Customer interaction with driver, fare payments with change and loading Breeze cards
- AVL System availability
- Supervisory staffing at garages and on-route

Bus OTP Partners

- In FY12, a joint partnership was formed to improve OTP with MARTA offices of Research & Analysis, Bus Operations, Planning & Scheduling, Customer Service, Information Technology and Bus Maintenance
- Personnel from joint partnership of MARTA business units are members of working groups that monitor the systems which collect data used to calculate ridership and OTP
- Standing Committees
 - Bus OTP
 - AVL Sustainability
 - System Health
 - Route Management

Bus OTP Success Factors

- Inter-Office Task Force
 - Underperforming Routes Task Force
 - Monthly Meetings with Operational Personnel
- In-Depth Data Analysis
 - Bus OTP Reports
 - Bus Operator OTP Report
 - Detailed Analytical Report per Request
- Bus Supervision
 - Bus Middle & Lower Management Engagement

- AVL Data Collection System
 - System Issues
 - Garage Pull out/Operator log-on
 - Missed Timepoints
- Scheduling Changes
 - Mark-up Improvements

Next Steps

- Continue monitoring routes, operators & AVL system
- Continue creating opportunities to interface interdepartmentally
- Continue to look at scheduling opportunities for improvement
- Continue to track customer satisfaction and complaints concerning OTP
- Implement new initiatives
 - Explore using traffic congestion data
 - Use dashboards to report OTP to management

Other Matters

Mrs. McClendon made the following special announcements:

- Georgia Legislative Session begins Monday, January 12
- Georgia Chamber of Commerce Eggs & Issues Breakfast – January 13
- DeKalb State of the County Address – January 22

Adjournment

The Planning & External Relations Committee meeting adjourned at 11:33 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Kellee N. McDaniel
Senior Executive Administrator to the Board