**From:** DiMassimo, Faye
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 23, 2015 2:16 PM
**To:** 'Rsifen@aol.com'; Ott, Bob; Cupid, Lisa; Birrell, JoAnn; Weatherford, Bob; Lee, Tim; Brownlow, Kellie; Hankerson, David; Dance, Deborah
**Cc:** Wilgus, Jim; Meyer, Eric; Sewell, Marty
**Subject:** RE: questions for Cobb County

Mr. Sifen,

Thank you for the opportunity to address your questions. Answers follow each below. As a member of the Transit Advisory Board and several of the mentioned stakeholder activities, you may already be familiar with some of this information.

* Regarding the Connect Cobb BRT proposal, is it correct that Cobb County has stated in documents / communications to the FTA, and or any other government agencies, that Cobb County has accepted the LPA?

No

* Is it correct that the LPA has never been put to a vote by the BOC at a BOC meeting?

Yes

* Is it correct that the assertion that Cobb County has "accepted" the LPA is based on the fact that at a BOC work session on February 28, 2012, that no commissioners had any questions or comments, and that is somehow the basis for the assertion that the BOC "accepted" the LPA?

No, as noted above, Cobb County has not stated that the LPA recommendation has been accepted.

* With regard to community support for BRT on Cobb Parkway, what has Cobb County told FTA regarding the level of community support for BRT, and what is the basis for that claimed level of support?

Cobb County has communicated the activities of the following regarding community attitudes and comments on the proposed Connect Cobb project:

***Alternatives Analysis***

- **Technical Team** and **Partners Team** (6 total): 8/31/11, 11/15//11, 1/25/12, 5/29/12 (joint with Stakeholder Roundtables) and were invited to the 9/11/12 and 9/25/12 BOC meetings for the recommended LPA presentation.

- **FTA** coordination (4 total): 10/5/11, 2/16/12, 4/11/12, 6/14/12

- **GDOT** coordination (3 total): 6/8/12, 7/13/12, 8/31/12

- **ARC** coordination (3 total): 4/12/12 (RTC), 4/25/12 (ARC Board), 5/22/12 (TCC)
- **Cobb Transit Advisory Board** (2 total): 2/7/12, 6/25/12
- **Stakeholder Roundtables** (7 total): 11/15/11 (Combined – Kickoff), 12/6/11 (Transportation and Air Quality), 12/6/11 (Land Use), 12/8/11 (Economic Development, 12/8/11 (Environment), 12/13/11 (Financial), 2/7/12 (Combined – Status Update/Alternatives/Station Locations), 5/29/12 (joint with Technical Team and Partners Team)
- **Stakeholder Briefings** (14 total): 1/31/12, 8/13/12 (Midtown Alliance, City of Atlanta and Atlanta BeltLine), 2/7/12 (Dobbins ARB - included base tenants), 2/28/12 (BOC), 3/27/12 (TCACID), 3/29/12 (CCID), 6/14/12 (Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper and NPS), 8/3/12 (City of Kennesaw), 8/3/12 (KSU), 8/4/12 (City of Acworth), 8/8/12 (City of Marietta), 8/24/12 (Cobb Marietta Coliseum and Exhibit Hall Authority), 9/1/12 (SPSU), 9/12/12 (City of Smyrna)
- **Environmental Justice** (3 total): 3/6/12 and 3/8/12 (CCT kiosks at CTC and MTC), 3/19/12 (Community Leadership Briefing)
- **College and University**: Online survey collected 480 responses from Chattahoochee Tech, SCAD (Atlanta), Georgia Tech, GSU, KSU, SPSU, Life University
- **City of Atlanta** (4 total): 4/30/12 (citywide conversation), 5/7/12 (Northside Study Group), 5/21/12 (Westside Study Group), 9/27/12 (citywide conversation)
- **BOC** (4 total – work sessions): 2/22/11, 2/28/12, 9/11/12, 9/25/12
- **Scientifically valid Public Opinion Polls (2)** Fall 2011 and 2012

*Environmental Assessment*

- **Technical Team** and **Partners Team** (1 total): 2/20/13 (members present included MARTA, City of Atlanta, City of Marietta, GDOT, Georgia Tech)
- **City of Marietta** (1 total): 4/4/13 (City of Marietta Departments of Development Services, Economic Development, and Public Works
- **Arts Center Station area partners** (4 total): 6/21/13, 7/24/13, 1/24/14, 8/12/14 (City of Atlanta, MARTA, Midtown Alliance, ARC)
- **Cobb Transit Advisory Board** (2 total): 9/23/13, 2/24/14
- **CTP 2040 Stakeholder Meeting** (1 total): 10/21/13: (included NPS, SPSU, Life, CCID)
- **NPS/Kennesaw Mountain National Battlefield Park** (1 total): 11/6/13
- **GDOT/ARC** (1 total): 12/2/13
- **North American Properties** (operator of Atlantic Station) (1 total): 1/24/14
- **MARTA** (1 total): 2/24/14

- **Station Area Charrette** (5-day Charrette – multiple meetings): – 3/31/14 – 4/4/14 (included Atlanta Braves, City of Marietta Economic Development Division, City of Marietta Engineering, Cobb Chamber, ComDev, Council for Quality Growth, CCID, KSU, Lockheed Martin, Olshan Properties, TCACID – 3/31/14 – 4/4/14

- **Public Safety Outreach** (1 total): 1/26/15 (included City of Marietta, City of Smyrna, Cobb County Department of Public Safety)

- **BOC** (2 total): 4/11/14 (work session), 6/20/14 (special called meeting – 2016 SPLOST)

- **Public Information Open House** (1 total): 11/12/13

- **(FUTURE) Public Hearing Open House** (1 total): 6/29/15

**Additional Public Opinion Polls associated with the CTP** (2) Fall 2013 and Spring 2014

**BOC presentations/Works Sessions on Connect Cobb AA/EA** 2/22/11, 2/28/12, 9/11/12, 9/25/12, 4/22/14.

* CobbDOT.org has a web page for the Cobb Connect Environmental Analysis (EA). That page says that the EA has been approved. Going to the actual document, the first page after the Title page is a letter that appears to be approving the EA, signed by Faye Dimassimo on March 31, 2015, and signed by a representative of FTA on April 14, 2015. Has the BOC voted to approve the EA? Does the BOC have no role in approving the EA?

No - The EA (and all such environmental documents prepared for roadway or transit projects that may be eligible for federal funding) is a technical document not approved by the local or State government but by the lead federal agency.

* Has the LPA been finalized?

No

Or is the next step after approval of the EA to finalize the LPA?

It may be considered by the BOC as they desire in the future.

* If the LPA has not been finalized, then how has Cobb County "accepted" the LPA?

As stated above, Cobb County has not indicated that the LPA recommendation was accepted. In the cite referenced, the term "accepted" was in reference to a presentation made.

* If the FTA has requirements that in order for them to advance a project, or approve a project, that one of the requirements is that the governing authority has to have "accepted" the LPA, and if Cobb County has communicated to the FTA that Cobb's governing authority has accepted the LPA, and if the Cobb BOC has never actually voted to accept the LPA, how is this not a communication that would have caused FTA to believe that a necessary action took place, when that action has not taken place?

Prior to consideration for federal implementation funding (New Starts), the BOC would need to approve the LPA.

* If FTA's approval of the EA was based in part on Cobb's claims that Cobb's governing authority had "accepted" the LPA, and if acceptance of the LPA was a requirement in order for FTA to be able to approve the EA, and if in fact the Cobb BOC never actually voted to approve the LPA, is the FTA's approval of the EA valid, and could the FTA's approval of the EA be challenged and invalidated?

The LPA recommendation that resulted from the AA continues to be refined through the EA and may be considered upon the study completion and the culmination of the ongoing process. We have not stated it was adopted but the various presentations noted above were received/accepted and the authorizations that continued our work effort from AA through EA were considered and/or approved by the Board of Commissioners on 11/8/11, 1/10/12, 2/14/12, 2/28/12, 3/13/12, 7/24/12.

* Questions have already been raised as to whether Cobb voters will wind up being bypassed with regard to Cobb Parkway BRT. Is the Cobb BOC also being bypassed in this process?

No

Has the LPA been "accepted" by Cobb's governing authority without the Cobb BOC ever having voted to "accept" the LPA?

No

And has the EA been approved without the Cobb BOC ever having voted on this?

Yes – the BOC does not approve the EA. Rather, they have approved the various contracts and associated commitments of funding for the AA and EA studies. Additionally, should they decide to advance the project in the future, the BOC will need to adopt the recommended LPA and authorize any actions necessary for further development and implementation.

Cobb County is always committed to transparency in our efforts. This information, along with links to relevant supporting documentation, will be posted as a Q & A on our website later this week.

Faye Q. DiMassimo, AICP
Director
**COBB COUNTY DOT**
1890 County Services Pkwy / Marietta, GA 30008 / Tel: (770) 528-1647
Cobb County DOT Website: www.cobbdot.org
Road Closure Information: http://www.cobbgis.org:81/CobbRSISMobile/Handheld.html?viewer=cobbviewer
Text "Follow cobbcountygovt" to 40404 or Follow on Twitter @cobbcountygovt for Traffic Alerts

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**From:** Rsifen@aol.com [mailto:Rsifen@aol.com]
**Sent:** Friday, June 19, 2015 8:28 AM
**To:** Ott, Bob; Cupid, Lisa; Birrell, JoAnn; Weatherford, Bob; Lee, Tim; Brownlow, Kellie; DiMassimo, Faye; Hankerson, David; Dance, Deborah
**Subject:** questions for Cobb County

Hello Cobb County. I have several questions regarding communications and claims that Cobb County may have made regarding the Connect Cobb studies.

* Regarding the Connect Cobb BRT proposal, is it correct that Cobb County has stated in documents / communications to the FTA, and or any other government agencies, that Cobb County has accepted the LPA?

* Is it correct that the LPA has never been put to a vote by the BOC at a BOC meeting?

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* Has the LPA been finalized? Or is the next step after approval of the EA to finalize the LPA?

* If the LPA has not been finalized, then how has Cobb County "accepted" the LPA?

* If the FTA has requirements that in order for them to advance a project, or approve a project, that one of the requirements is that the governing authority has to have "accepted" the LPA, and if Cobb County has communicated to the FTA that Cobb's governing authority has accepted the LPA, and if the Cobb BOC has never actually voted to accept the LPA, how is this not a communication that would have caused FTA to believe that a necessary action took place, when that action has not taken place?

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* Questions have already been raised as to whether Cobb voters will wind up being bypassed with regard to Cobb Parkway BRT. Is the Cobb BOC also being bypassed in this process? Has the LPA been "accepted" by Cobb's governing authority without the Cobb BOC ever having voted to "accept" the LPA? And has the EA been approved without the Cobb BOC ever having voted on this?

* At Chairman Lee's town hall in Vinings last night, he mentioned that he has added a resolution to the agenda for the June 23 BOC meeting regarding a BRT referendum. I have now reviewed the proposed resolution, and I have concerns.

1. The resolution does nothing to amend the language adopted into the CTP that gives future BOCs a preemptive ok to not hold the referendum.

2. I appreciate the acknowledgement that this BOC has committed to the citizens of Cobb County that if Cobb Parkway BRT is to move forward, that it would be put to Cobb voters for approval. However the resolution is adamant that the commitment to actually hold a referendum is limited to just this BOC, and there is no recommendation that future BOCs honor the commitment made by this BOC to put BRT to a referendum.

3. I would ask all commissioners not to rush into the language of the resolution that is on the June 23 agenda, and to consider alternative solutions offered by CCCC, and the alternative resolution that is supposed to be forthcoming from Commissioners Ott and Cupid.

Thanks

Ron Sifen