



Board of Directors Meeting of the
Central Midlands Council of Governments

Thursday, February 25, 2016 ♦ 12:00 p.m. ♦ CMCOG Conference Room

OVERALL AGENDA

ACTION

A. Call to Order and Introductions

1. Determination of Quorum
2. Approve Order and Contents of the Overall Agenda
3. Introduction of Guests
4. Invocation

**Group
Gregory Sprouse**

B. Consent Agenda

1. Approval of the January 28, 2016 Board Meeting Minutes (*Enclosure 1*)
2. UPWP Amendment – Kershaw County Transit Feasibility Study (*Enclosure 2*)
3. TIP Amendment – Vista Greenway Phase II (*Enclosure 3*)
4. UPWP Amendment – Regional Growth and Development (*Enclosure 4*)
5. Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study (*Enclosure 5*)
6. Rural TIP Amendment – Bush River Road Resurfacing Project (*Enclosure 6*)

C. Regular Agenda

1. Transportation Alternative Program Amendment (*Enclosure 7*)
2. Title VI Plan Amendment (*Enclosure 8*)
3. CMCOG Board Bylaws Amendment (*Enclosure 9*)

**Reginald Simmons
Reginald Simmons
Reginald Simmons**

INFORMATION

D. Announcements / Committee or Staff Reports / Correspondences

1. Executive Director's Report (*Enclosure 10*)
2. Legislative Update (*Enclosure 11*)
3. River Alliance Update – Columbia's River Future
4. Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan Update
5. Board Member Spotlight

**Ben Mauldin
Gregory Sprouse
Mike Dawson
Guillermo Espinosa
Roger Gaddy**

E. Old/New Business

F. Other Business

G. Adjourn

REMINDER: The next CMCOG Board of Directors Meeting will be held on Thursday, March 24, 2016 in the COG Conference Room

Note: Full Agenda packets can be found on the CMCOG website at www.cmcog.org.

Serving Local Governments in South Carolina's Midlands

236 Stoneridge Drive, Columbia, SC 29210 ♦ (803) 376-5390 ♦ FAX (803) 376-5394 ♦ Web Site: <http://www.centralmidlands.org>



**Board of Directors Meeting of the
Central Midlands Council of Governments**

Thursday, January 28, 2016 ♦ 12:00 p.m. ♦ CMCOG Conference Room

BOARD MEMBERS PRESENT:

Dennis Arledge, Kershaw County
Dr. Jimmy Bales, Richland Co. Legislative Delegation
Connie Breeden, Richland County
Larry Brigham, Lexington County Council
David Brown, Fairfield County
John Carrigg, Lexington County
Alfred Comfort, Richland County
Ellen Cooper, City of Columbia
Todd Cullum, Lexington County Council
Sam Davis, Columbia City Council
Smokey Davis, Lexington County
MaryGail Douglas, Fairfield Co Legislative Delegation
Clabie Edmond, Lexington County
Shawn Epps, City of Columbia
Roger Gaddy, CMCOG Chair, Mayor of Winnsboro
John Hardee, City of Columbia
Les Hipp, Newberry County Council
Johnny Jeffcoat, Lexington County Council
Wilber Lee Jeffcoat, Lexington County
Steve MacDougall, Mayor of Lexington
Earl McLeod, Lexington County
Walt McLeod, Newberry Co Legislative Delegation
Joe Mergo, Lexington County
Tony Mizzell, Richland County
Elise Partin, Mayor of Cayce
Juston Ricard, Springdale Town Council
Marion Robinson, Fairfield County Council
Bill Waldrop, Newberry County Council
Mark Williams, City of Forest Acres
Teresa Wilson, City of Columbia

ADVISORY MEMBERS PRESENT:

Barbara Smith, Mayor of Pelion
Skip Wilson, Mayor of Chapin

AFFILIATE MEMBER PRESENT:

Dr. Ron Rhames, Midlands Technical College

GUESTS PRESENT:

Tevia Davis, S.C. Department of Transportation
Richard Dreyer, Tindale Oliver
John Fechtel
Malcolm Gordge, Town of Blythewood
Chris Jeffcoat
Kenny Larimore, S.C. Department of Transportation
Holland Leger, Lexington County Planning
Yolanda Morris, Federal Highway Administration
Jennifer Necker, S.C. Department of Transportation
Milton Pope, Fairfield County
Yvette Rowland, Office of Senator Lindsey Graham
Bob Schneider, The Comet
Sonny Timmerman, Richland County Penny Sales Tax

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:

Felicia Anderson, HR / Operations Manager
Roland Bart, Chief Transportation Planner
Eartha Burrell, Community Development Planner
Cindy Curtis, Director of the Area Agency on Aging
Guillermo Espinosa, Senior Planner
Kaitlyn Flanagan, Planning Assistant
Cyndi Gawronski, Community Development
Manager
Anna Harmon, Regional Long-Term Care
Ombudsman Program Director
Kevin Hill, Director of Workforce Development
Jason Kent, GIS Manager
Ben Mauldin, Executive Director
Malia Ropel, Finance Director
Annacie Sastry, Family Caregiver Support Program
Intern
Andy Simmons, Information Services Manager
Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive
Director/Transportation Director
Gregory Sprouse, Director of Research, Planning and
Development
Emily Walker, Family Caregiver Support Program
Intern

A. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 12:05 p.m. on January 28, 2016 by Chairman Roger Gaddy.

A1. Determination of Quorum

Chairperson Gaddy acknowledged the presence of a quorum.

A3. Introduction of Guests

Gregory Sprouse introduced the guests at today's meeting. They are listed on the first page.

A4. Introduction of New Board Members

Irmo Town Councilwoman, Kathy Condom, was recently appointed to the Board of Directors.

A5. Invocation

Wilber Lee Jeffcoat gave the invocation.

B. CONSENT AGENDA

1. Approval of the December 10, 2015 Board Meeting Minutes
2. FY 2015 Central Midlands COG Financial Audit – **Approve the Financial and Compliance Report for the Fiscal Year Ended June 30, 2015, approved**
3. Statewide ITS Architecture – **Adopt the Statewide ITS Architecture as the ITS Architecture for the COATS MPO, approved**
4. TIP Amendment – Vista Greenway Phase II - **Amend the 2013-2019 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add \$145,000 in 2015 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds for the Vista Greenway Phase II Project, approved**
5. CMCOG Authorization of Section 5307 Funds to CMRTA - **Authorize the COG to transfer Section 5307 funds to the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority (CMRTA), approved**
6. Resolution to Apply for Federal and State Grants - **Adopt a resolution authorizing the Executive Director to execute and file grant applications on behalf of CMCOG with the U.S. Department of Transportation and the S.C. Department of Transportation to aid in the financing of transportation planning projects, planning/special studies, capital, and operating/administrative assistance programs, approved**
7. Quarterly Financial Statement and Budget Revision, approved

C. REGULAR AGENDA

C1. UPWP Amendment – Kershaw County Transit Feasibility

Reginald Simmons presented a request for approval to amend the 2015-2017 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to add the Kershaw County Transit Feasibility Study. He provided an overview of the UPWP. He also explained that after the 2010 Census, the COATS MPO expanded its boundary up to the Wateree River in Kershaw County. With that expansion, Kershaw County has inquired about

the inclusion of transit services in the planning area. It has been determined that a feasibility study will be needed in order to assess the transit needs of Kershaw County. The projected cost of the study is \$100,000 with an 80/20 matching requirement. Kershaw County has agreed to pay the local match. The study is anticipated to begin in FY 2017.

MOTION, approved

Bill Waldrop moved to approve the amendment of the 2015-2017 UPWP to add the Kershaw County Transit Feasibility Study, as presented. The motion was seconded and approved unanimously.

C2. UPWP Amendment – Regional Growth and Development

Mr. Simmons presented a request for approval to amend the 2015-2017 UPWP to add the Regional Growth and Development planning task. He provided an overview of the UPWP. He explained that federal guidance has included scenario planning as a tool to assist the MPOs in assessing where growth and development is going to occur in their planning region. Staff's proposal is to conduct a scenario planning project which would include an evaluation of the relationship between land use, transportation, water and sewer infrastructure, economic development and environmental mitigation. This will allow the COG to better plan for regional growth and development and assess the impact it will have on our regional transportation network. The proposed project cost is \$125,000. Once started, the project is expected to take 12 months to complete.

MOTION, approved

Earl McLeod moved, seconded by Todd Cullum, to approve the amendment of the 2015-2017 UPWP to add the Regional Growth and Development planning task, as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

C3. Rural TIP Amendment – Bush River Road Resurfacing Project

Mr. Simmons presented a request for approval to amend the 2013-2017 Rural Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to add \$1 million for the Bush River Road Resurfacing Project. The Bush River Road is an estimated 12-mile corridor in Newberry County. The SCDOT District Engineering Office has noted that the pavement for the corridor is in critical need of repair and a full resurfacing project will need to be completed. SCDOT has been able to complete a portion of the corridor, but four (4) miles is still without funding.

MOTION, approved

Bill Waldrop moved, seconded by Smokey Davis, to approve the amendment of the 2013-2019 Rural TIP to add \$1 million for the Bush River Road Resurfacing Project, as presented. The motion was approved unanimously.

C4. Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study

Richard Dreyer of Tindale Oliver presented a request for approval to adopt the Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study. Mr. Dreyer discussed the project's study area and background assessment of Lexington and Richland Counties. He provided further details of the Regional Transit Needs Assessment Process that included public outreach efforts, a background assessment of transit dependent populations and major destinations, recommendations to address

identified needs, and an implementation plan for each county to consider. A discussion took place regarding the project.

MOTION, *approved*

Earl McLeod moved, seconded by Elise Partin, to table this agenda item until the next board meeting. The vote was in favor.

D. ANNOUNCEMENTS / COMMITTEE OR STAFF REPORTS / CORRESPONDENCES

D1. Executive Director's Report

Ben Maudlin gave the following report:

- a. **CMCOG Technical Assistance Services**: In preparation for the COG's budget-planning process this year, staff will be contacting local governments to remind them of the COG's capabilities in providing technical assistance.
- b. **South Carolina Association of Counties Legislative Program**: The S.C. Association of Counties will hold its 29th Annual Mid-Year Conference for county officials on February 17, 2016 at Embassy Suites Hotel in Columbia. Classes for the Institute of Government will be held on February 18.
- c. **Municipal Association of South Carolina's Hometown Legislative Action Day**: The Municipal Association of South Carolina's Hometown Legislative Action Day will take place on February 3, 2016 at the Columbia Marriott.
- d. **COATS MPO Recertification/CMCOG Rural Transportation Review**: The COATS MPO completed its recertification review on January 12, 2016. Staff from FHWA, FTA and SCDOT visited CMCOG to review the CMCOG/COATS transportation planning processes. The transportation staff responded to nearly 300 hundred questions as part of the review processes.
- e. **Long-Term Care Ombudsman Certification Training**: Our Regional Long-Term Care Ombudsman Director, Anna Harmon, conducted a two-day training session for new Long-Term Care Ombudsmen across the state. The training took place on January 20-21, 2016.
- f. **South Carolina Department of Transportation Commission**: The SCDOT Commission unanimously elected John N. Hardee as Vice-Chairman of the Commission.

D2. Walk Bike Columbia NADO Presentation

City of Columbia was presented with the 2015 NADO Innovation Award for the Walk Bike Columbia Project. The National Association of Development Organizations recognizes innovative approaches to regional economic and community development. Columbia City Manager, Teresa Wilson, accepted the award for the City.

D3. WIOA Partnership to Assist Flood Victims

Kevin Hill announced that MWDB/WIOA was awarded a grant for Lexington and Richland Counties by the U.S. Department of Labor to provide temporary jobs to assist with cleanup and recovery efforts. He provided details of the grant.

D4. Community Development Block Grant Update

Cyndi Gawronski provided information on two (2) Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) sources for the Midlands: HUD Entitlements for Lexington County, City of Columbia and Richland County; and State Funding from the S.C. Department of Commerce (SCDOC). Ms. Gawronski also discussed the 2016 SCDOC Allocation Plan, upcoming CDBG application deadlines and other grant opportunities.

D5. 208 Water Quality Update

Gregory Sprouse provided an update on the Carolina Water Service / I-20 issue.

D6. Regional Roundup

Les Hipp provided an update on activities in Newberry County.

E. OLD / NEW BUSINESS

No old or new business was brought forth.

F. OTHER BUSINESS

No other business was brought forth.

G. ADJOURN

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:56 p.m.

These minutes were respectfully submitted by Felicia C. Anderson



Approved by the CMCOG Board/MPO Policy Committee on January 28th.

Public comment period ended on February 11, 2016

No Public Comments Received

Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Board of Directors**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: January 28, 2016

SUBJECT: **Kershaw County Transit Feasibility Study**

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests approval to amend the 2015-2017 UPWP to add the Kershaw County Transit Feasibility Study.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

With the expansion of our MPO into Kershaw County, the county has expressed an interest in determining their need for transit services in this growing area. Based on their interest, staff has met SCDOT and Santee-Wateree RTA to discuss potential options to address their potential transit needs. Based on these discussions, staff will request to amend its 2015-2017 UPWP to include a task for the Kershaw County Transit Feasibility Study.

Through our coordination and cooperation with the Kershaw County, Santee-Wateree RTA, and the South Carolina Department of Transportation, CMCOG will perform a transit feasibility study. The intent of this study is to determine the potential for transit service and to help gauge the short and long-term benefits and demands for a region-wide transit system. The study will assess the feasibility of transit within the COATS MPO portion of Kershaw County and its connection to Richland County. Kershaw County has also agreed to provide the local match to implement this project.

ATTACHMENT

UPWP Page

PROJECT NO:	3R	
PROJECT TITLE:	Kershaw County Transit Feasibility Study	
OBJECTIVE:		
Determining the feasibility for transit service in the COATS MPO portion of Kershaw County		
METHODOLOGY:		
<p>Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) in coordination and cooperation with the Kershaw County, Santee-Wateree RTA, and the South Carolina Department of Transportation will perform a transit feasibility study. The intent of this study is to determine the potential for transit service and to help gauge the short and long-term benefits and demands for a region-wide transit system. The study will assess the feasibility of transit within the COATS MPO portion of Kershaw County and its the connection to Richland County.</p>		
END PRODUCT:		
Kershaw County Transit Feasibility Plan		
Project Sponsor/Participating Agencies:	Funding Sources:	
Sponsor: COATS Participating Agencies: COATS, CMCOG Member Governments, Other agencies as appropriate	FY 2015 - 2016	FY 2016 - 2017
	FHWA/FTA Consolidated \$ 80,000.00 FTA (Section 5307) \$ 0.00 <u>LOCAL \$ 20,000.00</u> TOTAL \$ 100,000.00	FHWA/FTA Consolidated \$ 0.00 FTA (Section 5307) \$ 0.00 <u>LOCAL \$ 0.00</u> TOTAL \$ 0.00

ENCLOSURE 2

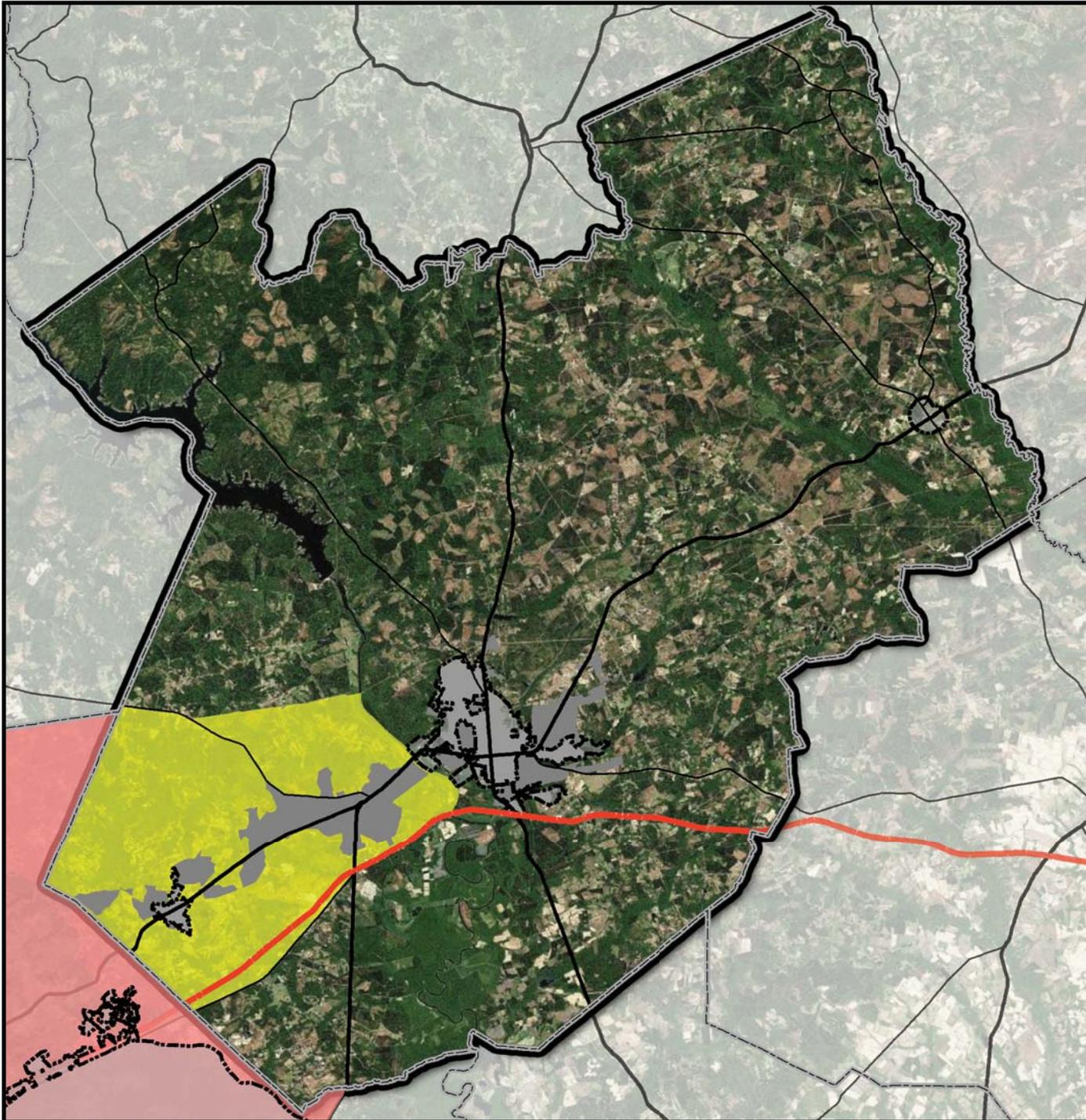
Kershaw County SubArea Plan Boundary



-  **Municipal Boundary**
-  **2010 Urbanized Area**
-  **COATS Boundary (Richland)**
-  **Kershaw County
Subarea Plan Study Area**



Central Midlands Council of Government disclaims responsibility for damage or liability associated with the use of this information. All reasonable efforts have been made to ensure accuracy.



Approved by the CMCOG Board/MPO Policy Committee on January 28th.

Public comment period ended

on February 11, 2016.

No Public Comments Received



Utilities & Engineering Department

Engineering Division

1136 Washington Street, Columbia, SC 29201 · Phone 803-545-3400 · Fax 803-545-3322

September 17, 2015

Mr. Reginald Simmons
Deputy Executive Director/Director of Transportation
Central Midlands Council of Governments
236 Stoneridge Drive
Columbia, SC 29210

Re: Vista Greenway Trail / Phase 2

Dear Mr. Simmons:

The City of Columbia plans to construct a 2 City block Vista Greenway Trail that would begin at Taylor Street and extend north to Elmwood Ave. The Vista Greenway Trail will connect to the completed first phase of the Vista Greenway Project, which consists of 3 City blocks from Lady to Taylor Streets and linked to the Congaree Vista and Finlay Park. This phase of the Vista Greenway Project is open, operational and has been hugely successful.

The Taylor Street portion of the trail would link pedestrians and cyclist from the Vista through Finlay Park and to historic Arsenal Hill and Elmwood Park. The Transportation Alternatives Program funds being requested (\$145,000) will be utilized for the construction of the trail surface and lighting to provide safety from the trail to the tunnel at Finlay Park. The renovations to the tunnel will provide a safer and more welcoming environment for pedestrians and cyclist.

The Vista Greenway Trail is a trail in which, the City of Columbia will transform the former Seaboard Air Line Railroad into a fourteen foot (14') wide lighted asphalt trail for biking and pedestrian use from Lady Street to Elmwood Avenue. The development of the Vista Greenway Trail will facilitate and encourage tourism in the Columbia area by linking two major destinations of the Vista and Finlay Park. The trail will also transform underutilized and blighted areas and enhance the quality of life in the City of Columbia.

Sincerely,

Eric V. Cassell
Special Projects Administrator

Cc: Dana Higgins, P.E., City Engineer

VISTA GREENWAY PHASE 2



Labels on the map include: I-126, EXIT - ELMWOOD AVE, EXIT - HUGER ST, WILLIAMS, RICHLAND, LAUREL, GIST, PAVILLION TOWERS, THURMOND, RICHLAND, LAUREL, PULASKI, WAYNE, WAYNE, CALHOUN, GADSDEN, LINCOLN, TAYLOR, PARK, ASSEMBLY, and ELMWOOD.



Approved by the CMCOG Board/MPO Policy Committee on January 28th.

Public comment period ended on February 11, 2016

No Public Comments Received

Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Board of Directors**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: January 28, 2016

SUBJECT: **Regional Growth and Development Planning**

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests approval to amend the 2015-2017 UPWP to add the Regional Growth and Development planning task.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Scenario planning is an analytical tool that can help transportation professionals prepare for what lies ahead. Scenario planning provides a framework for developing a shared vision for the future by analyzing various forces (e.g., health, transportation, economic, environmental, land use, etc.) that affect growth. Scenario planning, which can be done at the statewide level or for metropolitan regions, tests various future alternatives that meet state and community needs. A defining characteristic of successful public sector scenario planning is that it actively involves the public, the business community, and elected officials on a broad scale, educating them about growth trends and trade-offs, and incorporating their values and feedback into future plans.

Staff will request to amend the UPWP to include a task to conduct a scenario planning project which would involve an evaluation of the relationship between land use, transportation, water and sewer infrastructure, economic development and environmental mitigation to better plan for regional growth and development throughout the regional transportation network.

ATTACHMENT

UPWP Page

PROJECT NO:	3Q	
PROJECT TITLE:	Regional Growth and Development Planning	
OBJECTIVE:		
Development of a regional growth and development plan through scenario planning		
METHODOLOGY:		
<p>Scenario planning is an analytical tool that can help transportation professionals prepare for what lies ahead. Scenario planning provides a framework for developing a shared vision for the future by analyzing various forces (e.g., health, transportation, economic, environmental, land use, etc.) that affect growth. Scenario planning, which can be done at the statewide level or for metropolitan regions, tests various future alternatives that meet state and community needs. A defining characteristic of successful public sector scenario planning is that it actively involves the public, the business community, and elected officials on a broad scale, educating them about growth trends and trade-offs, and incorporating their values and feedback into future plans.</p> <p>Staff will develop a Regional Growth and Development Plan which would involve an evaluation of the relationship between land use, transportation, water and sewer infrastructure, economic development and environmental mitigation to better plan for regional growth and development throughout the regional transportation network. The study will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Regional growth and development scenarios; • Transportation, water, and sewer infrastructure needs; • Economic development; and • Environmental mitigation measures to include incorporation of low impact development/green infrastructure concepts 		
END PRODUCT:		
A Regional Growth and Development Plan.		
Project Sponsor/Participating Agencies:	Funding Sources:	
Sponsor: COATS Participating Agencies: COATS, CMCOG Member Governments, Other agencies as appropriate	FY 2015 - 2016	FY 2016 - 2017
	FHWA/FTA Consolidated \$ 100,000.00 FTA (Section 5307) \$ 0.00 LOCAL \$ 25,000.00	FHWA/FTA Consolidated \$ 0.00 FTA (Section 5307) \$ 0.00 LOCAL \$ 0.00
	TOTAL \$ 125,000.00	TOTAL \$ 0.00



Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Board of Directors**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: January 28, 2016

SUBJECT: **Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study**

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests approval to adopt the Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study. The full document is available on our website for review.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG), in coordination with Lexington County and Richland County, conducted a regional transit needs assessment to assess the public's perception of transit needs throughout the two counties. Using public input combined with an assessment of transit dependent populations and major destinations outside of the existing fixed-route transit service area (as provided by the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority, operating as The COMET), the transportation needs were identified, ranked as good, better, and best, and prioritized based on several factors relating to the ease of implementation. Projects that rank as "good" are considered to meet the needs of the transit dependent population with the ability to travel independently. Projects that are considered "better" meet and exceed the needs of the transit dependent to provide service for the general population. Finally, projects that are considered the "best" would be directed towards commuters and a mode shift from automobiles, providing comprehensive, countywide service.

Staff will request adoption of this report.

ATTACHMENT

Project Overview

Central Midlands Council of Governments

Regional Transit Needs Assessment and Feasibility Study

Study Overview

The Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG), in coordination with Lexington County and Richland County, conducted a regional transit needs assessment to assess the public's perception of transit needs throughout the two counties. Using public input combined with an assessment of transit dependent populations and major destinations outside of the existing fixed-route transit service area (as provided by the Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority, operating as The COMET), the transportation needs were identified, ranked as good, better, and best, and prioritized based on several factors relating to the ease of implementation. Projects that rank as "good" are considered to meet the needs of the transit dependent population with the ability to travel independently. Projects that are considered "better" meet and exceed the needs of the transit dependent to provide service for the general population. Finally, projects that are considered the "best" would be directed towards commuters and a mode shift from automobiles, providing comprehensive, countywide service.

Project Background

The study focused mainly on the areas within Lexington and Richland Counties that are located outside of The COMET's existing fixed-route transit service area, which is primarily concentrated in the regional urban center of the City of Columbia. However, the assessment also reviewed those areas with limited transportation services available on the periphery of the fixed-route service area. Previous studies have been conducted to review the transportation needs inside The COMET service area; therefore, special consideration was given to areas with mobility needs and how best to achieve an increased level of transportation service for those more rural communities. Some of the geographic locations studied may have transportation options available other than The COMET that are provided through non-profit organizations. These services were also reviewed to determine the accessibility of information describing the services and associated eligibility requirements to determine whether the requirements were too stringent or inapplicable to the general public.

Report Organization

The plan is comprised of eight major sections, including an introduction. Each of the sections is briefly described below.

Section 2 provides an overview of the study area demographics and existing conditions. The section provides information on the environment in which any proposed transportation services would operate. The purpose of this section is to present an understanding of the operating environment in the context of socioeconomics, land uses, and available transportation services.

Section 3 summarizes the extensive public involvement activities that were undertaken as part of the regional transit assessment for the outlying areas of Lexington and Richland counties. Public involvement activities discussed and/or summarized in this section include the community surveying effort and other stakeholder meetings that were conducted to obtain feedback relating to the mobility needs.

Section 4 presents the unmet needs that were identified collectively through information reviewed as part of the assessments described in Sections 2 and 3. Unmet needs are summarized for the region as a whole and by each of the study area counties.

Section 5 presents all feasible alternatives that have been identified as a result of the technical review of existing conditions, demographic data, and major destination and public outreach comments. Using the background data for each sub-area within the larger region comprising the study area, all feasible alternatives are presented in this section and later prioritized for inclusion in the proposed implementation plan.

Section 6 provides the prioritization process that was used to rank the potential transportation options by good, better, and best. The prioritization process was also used to rank the projects for implementation independent of the best transportation option(s) for the sub-area, but based on ease of implementation, cost, and timeframe for project initiation.

Section 7 includes the implementation plan for the recommended transportation options for Lexington and Richland counties. The recommendations are organized by the suggested timeframe for implementation using five-year increments from 2015 through 2040.

Section 8 summarizes the conclusions of this regional transit needs assessment.



Approved by the CMCOG Board/MPO Policy Committee on January 28th.

Public comment period ended on February 22, 2016

No Public Comments Received

Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Board of Directors**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: January 28, 2016

SUBJECT: **Bush River Road Resurfacing**

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments staff will request approval to amend the 2013-2019 Rural TIP to add \$1 million for the Bush River Road Resurfacing Project.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

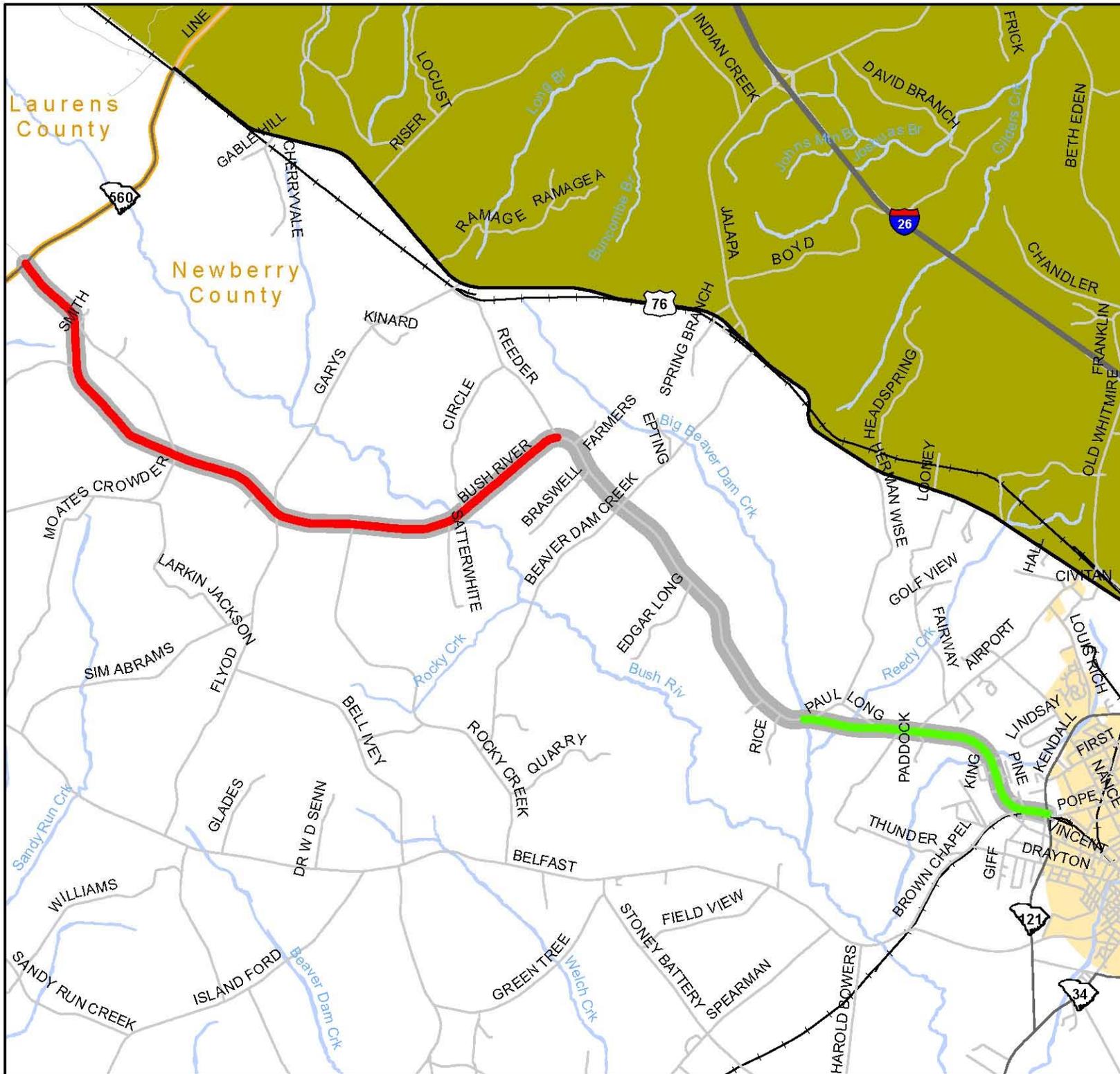
Bush River Road is a 12 mile corridor from the City of Newberry to the county line. The corridor has been in critical need of resurfacing. CMCOG has previously funded a 6 mile resurfacing project and SCDOT has previously completed a 2 mile resurfacing project. A total of 4 miles is still in need of repair. Staff will discuss the additional investment that will be needed to complete the resurfacing of this corridor.

SCDOT has completed cost estimates to resurface the corridor. The estimates are broken down into 4 different sections as outlined in the attached PDF file. SCDOT estimates that the construction cost for resurfacing a ten (10) mile section of the corridor (SC 560 to Big Beaver Dam Creek) is approximately \$3,000,000. Bush River Road is classified as a Federal Aid Eligible Secondary Route, therefore it competes for Federal Aid Resurfacing Funds against the primary routes in Newberry County that are also in need of resurfacing. Although SCDOT's Newberry Maintenance Unit has performed a substantial amount of patching and leveling work along Bush River Road, the patching work is still somewhat of a temporary bandage as many areas are on the verge of needing more extensive repair work. CMCOG has previously funded 6 miles at an estimated cost of \$2 million. It's anticipated that the remaining 4 miles can be addressed at an estimated cost of \$1 million.

ATTACHMENT

SCDOT Project Estimates

Rural TIP Amendment Bush River Road Resurfacing Project

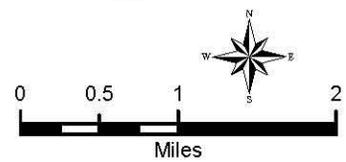


Legend

Project Funding

- █ CMOG
- █ SCDOT
- Bush River Road
- Interstates
- US Highways
- SC Highways
- Local Roads
- Railroad
- Water
- Municipal Boundaries
- Protected Land
- County Boundary

Central Midlands Council of Government disclaims responsibility for damage or liability associated with the use of this information. All reasonable efforts have been made to ensure accuracy.





Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Board of Directors**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: February 25, 2016

SUBJECT: **TAP Program Guidelines**

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests approval to amend the TAP Program guidelines to increase the maximum allowed amount from \$145K to \$180K per project.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) activities offer communities the opportunity to expand transportation choices. Activities such as safe bicycle and pedestrian facilities, scenic routes, beautification, and other investments increase opportunities for recreation, accessibility, and safety for everyone beyond traditional highway programs..

Under federal law, a Transportation Management Area (TMA) such as the COATS MPO manages their own TAP funding. As such, the COATS MPO has set a maximum amount in federal funds that each project can request. That amount was set at \$145,000 and has not been adjusted in the past twelve years. Staff will request to increase this amount to \$180,000 which will assist in addressing inflation over that timeframe and will allow for the opportunity to develop bigger projects.

ATTACHMENT

TAP Program Page

THE COATS MPO ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM

Funding Distribution

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funds is determined by dividing the national total among the States based on each State's proportionate share of FY 2009 Transportation Enhancements funding. Within each State, the amount for TAP is set aside proportionately from the State's National Highway Performance Program (NHPP), Surface Transportation Program (STP), Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP), Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ), and Metropolitan Planning apportionments. (23 U.S.C. 213(a))

**TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROJECT FEDERAL FUNDING REQUESTS
CANNOT EXCEED ~~\$145,000.00~~ \$180,000.00 PER GOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATION
PER PROJECT**

Governmental organizations may submit more than one (1) project application for funding consideration.

- ❖ Each “project” must be submitted on a separate, completed application.
- ❖ Applicants shall use the enclosed application for submission of their projects.
- ❖ All submissions shall be unbounded for easy copying and distribution.
- ❖ All applicants shall submit one (1) original, eight (8) copies, one (1) PDF for each project application.
- ❖ Governmental organizations that submit more than one project shall prioritize their projects for submission.

Matching Funds

All allowable expenditures for transportation alternatives projects are eligible to be reimbursed as follows:

Projects located within jurisdictions with population of *less than 50,000 will require a 20% local match*;

Projects located within jurisdictions with population *greater than 50,000 will require a 40% local match*.

(The 20 or 40 percent local share must be provided by the applicant.)

ANY PROJECT RELATED WORK DONE PRIOR TO CONTRACT EXECUTION (BETWEEN THE SCDOT AND THE GRANTEE) SHALL NOT BE ELIGIBLE FOR REIMBURSEMENT.



Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Board of Directors**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: February 25, 2016

SUBJECT: **Appendix A and E**

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests approval to amend the Title VI Plan to add Appendix A and E of the Standard Title VI/Nondiscrimination Assurances.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments as a condition to receiving Federal financial assistance from the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), is subject to and will comply with the following Statutory/Regulatory Authorities:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq., 78 stat. 252), (prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin);
- 49 C.F.R. Part 21 (entitled Nondiscrimination In Federally-Assisted Programs Of The Department Of Transportation—Effectuation Of Title VI Of The Civil Rights Act Of 1964);
- 28 C.F.R. § 50.3 (U.S. Department of Justice Guidelines for Enforcement of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964);
- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, (42 U.S.C. § 4601), prohibits unfair treatment of persons displaced or whose property has been acquired because of Federal or Federal-aid programs and projects;
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (29 U.S.C. § 794 et seq.), as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability); and 49 CFR Part 27;
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, (42 U.S.C. § 6101 et seq.), prohibits discrimination on the basis of age);
- The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, (PL 100-209, (Broadened the scope, coverage and applicability of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, by expanding the definition of the terms “programs or activities” to include all of the programs or activities of the Federal-aid recipients, subrecipients and contractors, whether such programs or activities are Federally funded or not);
- Title II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in the operation of public entities, public and private transportation systems, places of public accommodation, and certain testing entities (42 U.S.C. §§ 12131 – 12189) as implemented by Department of Transportation regulations 49 C.F.R. parts 37 and 38;
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits you from discriminating because of sex in education programs or activities (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq).

Staff will request that these Statutory/Regulatory Authorities be included in the CMCOG Title VI Plan.

ATTACHMENT

Appendix A and E

APPENDIX A

During the performance of this contract, the contractor, for itself, its assignees, and successors in interest (hereinafter referred to as the “contractor”) agrees as follows:

1. **Compliance with Regulations:** The contractor (hereinafter includes consultants) will comply with the Acts and the Regulations relative to Non-discrimination in Federally-assisted programs of the U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and Federal Transit Administration (FTA), as they may be amended from time to time, which are herein incorporated by reference and made a part of this contract.
2. **Non-discrimination:** The contractor, with regard to the work performed by it during the contract, will not discriminate on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability in the selection and retention of subcontractors, including procurements of materials and leases of equipment. The contractor will not participate directly or indirectly in the discrimination prohibited by the Acts and the Regulations, including employment practices when the contract covers any activity, project, or program set forth in Appendix B of 49 CFR Part 21. This includes FHWA or FTA specific program requirement.
3. **Solicitations for Subcontracts, Including Procurements of Materials and Equipment:** In all solicitations, either by competitive bidding, or negotiation made by the contractor for work to be performed under a subcontract, including procurements of materials, or leases of equipment, each potential subcontractor or supplier will be notified by the contractor of the contractor’s obligations under this contract and the Acts and the Regulations relative to Non-discrimination on the grounds of race, color, or national origin. This includes FHWA or FTA specific program requirement.
4. **Information and Reports:** The contractor will provide all information and reports required by the Acts, the Regulations, and directives issued pursuant thereto and will permit access to its books, records, accounts, other sources of information, and its facilities as may be determined by the **CENTRAL MIDLANDS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, the FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA), or the FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)** to be pertinent to ascertain compliance with such Acts, Regulations, and instructions. Where any information required of a contractor is in the exclusive possession of another who fails or refuses to furnish the information, the contractor will so certify to the CMCOG, FHWA or the FTA, as appropriate, and will set forth what efforts it has made to obtain the information.
5. **Sanctions for Noncompliance:** In the event of a contractor’s noncompliance with the Non-discrimination provisions of this contract, the CENTRAL MIDLANDS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS will impose such contract sanctions as it or the **FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA), or the FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)** may determine to be appropriate, including, but not limited to:
 - a. withholding payments to the contractor under the contract until the contractor complies; and/or
 - b. cancellation, termination, or suspension of the contract, in whole or in part.
6. **Incorporation of Provisions:** The contractor will include the provisions of paragraphs one (1) through six (6) in every subcontract, including procurements of materials and leases of equipment, unless exempt by the Acts, the Regulations and directives issued pursuant thereto. The contractor will take action with respect to any subcontract or procurement as the CENTRAL MIDLANDS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS, **the FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION (FHWA), or the FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)** may direct as a means of enforcing such provisions including sanctions for noncompliance. Provided, that if the contractor becomes involved in, or threatened with litigation by a subcontractor, or supplier because of such direction, the contractor may request the CENTRAL MIDLANDS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS to enter into any litigation to protect the interests of the CENTRAL MIDLANDS COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS. In addition, the contractor may request the United States to enter into the litigation to protect the interests of the United States.

APPENDIX E

During the performance of this contract, the contractor, for itself, its assignees, and successors in interest (hereinafter referred to as the “contractor”) agrees to comply with the following non-discrimination statutes and authorities, including, but not limited to:

Pertinent Non-Discrimination Authorities:

- Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. § 2000d *et seq.*, 78 stat.252), prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin); and 49 CFR Part 21.
- The Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, (42 U.S.C. § 4601), (prohibits unfair treatment of persons displaced or whose property has been acquired because of Federal or Federal-aid programs and projects);
- Federal-Aid Highway Act of 1973, (23 U.S.C. § 324 *et seq.*), prohibits discrimination on the basis of sex);
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, (29 U.S.C. § 794 *et seq.*), as amended, prohibits discrimination on the basis of disability; and 49 CFR Part 27;
- The Age Discrimination Act of 1975, as amended, (42 U.S.C. § 6101 *et seq.*), prohibits discrimination on the basis of age);
- Airport and Airway Improvement Act of 1982, (49 U.S.C. § 471, Section 47123, as amended, (prohibits discrimination based on race, creed, color, national origin, or sex);
- The Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987, (PL 100-209), Broadened the scope, coverage and applicability of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, The Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, by expanding the definition of the terms “programs or activities” to include all of the programs or activities of the Federal-aid recipients, sub-recipients and contractors, whether such programs or activities are Federally funded or not);
- Titles II and III of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibit discrimination on the basis of disability in the operation of public entities, public and private transportation systems, places of public accommodation, and certain testing entities (42 U.S.C. §§ 12131 – 12189) as implemented by Department of Transportation regulations 49 C.F.R. parts 37 and 38.
- The Federal Aviation Administration’s Non-discrimination statute (49 U.S.C. § 47123) (prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, and sex);
- Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, which ensures discrimination against minority populations by discouraging programs, policies, and activities with disproportionately high and adverse human health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations;
- Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency, and resulting agency guidance, national origin discrimination includes discrimination because of limited English proficiency (LEP). To ensure compliance with Title VI, you must take reasonable steps to ensure that LEP persons have meaningful access to your programs (70 Fed. Reg. at 74087 to 74100);
- Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, as amended, which prohibits you from discriminating because of sex in education programs or activities (20 U.S.C. 1681 *et seq*



Memorandum

TO: All Members of the CMCOG **Board of Directors**

FROM: Reginald Simmons, Deputy Executive Director/Transportation Director

DATE: February 25, 2016

SUBJECT: **MPO Planning Process**

REQUESTED ACTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments' staff requests approval to amend the CMCOG Bylaws to add an addendum that outlines the MPO Planning Process.

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

The Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) is a public agency created by the Counties of Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry and Richland, and the cities of Batesburg/Leesville, Cayce, Columbia, Forest Acres, Irmo, Lexington, Newberry, Springdale, West Columbia, and Winnsboro, as enabled by state planning law. The agency was organized in 1969 and has been providing planning, management and technical assistance to its member governments and local transit service providers since its inception. CMCOG has been charged with responsibility for area-wide transportation planning since its inception and serves as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation program/project purposes.

A metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is a transportation policy-making organization composed of representatives from local government and transportation implementers. The 1962 Federal-Aid Highway Act required the formation of a MPO for all metropolitan urbanized areas, with a population greater than 50,000.

MPOs were established to ensure that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs were based on a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) planning process. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs are channeled through this planning process. Since the CMCOG Board serves as the Policy Committee for the COATS MPO. Staff will request an addendum to the CMCOG Bylaws that outlines the metropolitan planning process for the COATS MPO.

ATTACHMENT

Addendum

ADDENDUM A

MPO PLANNING PROCESS

The Central Midlands Council of Governments (CMCOG) is a public agency created by the Counties of Fairfield, Lexington, Newberry and Richland, and the cities of Batesburg/Leesville, Cayce, Columbia, Forest Acres, Irmo, Lexington, Newberry, Springdale, West Columbia, and Winnsboro, as enabled by state planning law. The agency was organized in 1969 and has been providing planning, management and technical assistance to its member governments and local transit service providers since its inception. CMCOG has been charged with responsibility for area-wide transportation planning since its inception and serves as the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for transportation program/project purposes.

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MPOs were established to ensure that existing and future expenditures for transportation projects and programs were based on a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing (3-C) planning process. Federal funding for transportation projects and programs are channeled through this planning process. Over successive authorization cycles leading to the passage of the most recent federal legislation, Congress has added and revised substantive content expected from the 3-C process.

The Columbia Area Transportation Study (COATS) MPO is guided by three separate committees: the Policy Committee, Transportation Advisory Subcommittee, and the Technical Advisory Committee. The duties and responsibilities of those committees are as follows:

CMCOG Board of Directors (MPO Policy Committee)

The CMCOG Board of Directors also serves as the MPO Policy Committee. It is the decision-making body for all regional transportation plans and programs for this area. The MPO Policy Committee plans, develops and maintains an affordable, safe and efficient transportation system for the region, providing the forum through which local decision makers develop regional plans and programs. The MPO Policy Committee consists of representatives of the CMCOG member governments, wherein such membership is apportioned by population. Two thirds of the members are elected officials and one third are appointed citizens. Final responsibility for transportation planning and programming is vested in the CMCOG Board. The 51 members of the CMCOG Board include:

- Fairfield County..... 3 members
- Kershaw County..... 1 member
- Newberry County..... 3 members
- Lexington County..... 11 members
- Richland County..... 12 members

- City of Columbia..... 7 members
- Town of Irmo..... 1 member
- Town of Lexington..... 1 member
- City of Newberry..... 1 member
- Town of Springdale..... 1 member
- City of West Columbia..... 1 member
- City of Cayce..... 1 member
- Town of Batesburg-Leesville..... 1 member
- Town of Winnsboro.....1 member
- City of Forest Acres..... 1 member
- Fairfield Co. Legislative Delegation..... 1 member
- Lexington Co. Legislative Delegation....1 member
- Newberry Co. Legislative Delegation.... 1 member
- Richland Co. Legislative Delegation.....1 member
- Transit Representative.....1 member

Transportation Advisory Subcommittee

A Transportation Advisory Subcommittee has been established as a Subcommittee of the MPO Policy Committee (CMCOG Board). It is the recommending body for all regional transportation plans and programs for this area. The Transportation Advisory Subcommittee plans, develops and maintains an affordable, safe and efficient transportation system for the region, providing the forum through which local decision makers develop regional plans and programs. Recommendations made by the Transportation Advisory Subcommittee are sent to the MPO Policy Committee for review. The Transportation Advisory Subcommittee members are local elected officials or their designees, and membership has been dispersed among the primary county and municipal jurisdictions found within the transportation planning study area. Members of the Subcommittee are appointed by the duly elected MPO (CMCOG) Chairman. The Transportation Subcommittee Chairman and Vice Chairman are also appointed by the duly elected MPO (CMCOG) Chairman. The Chairmanship of the Transportation Subcommittee rotates among the member governments. The composition of the Transportation Subcommittee (15 total) is as follows:

- Three (3) Representatives from City of Columbia
- Three (3) Representatives from Lexington County
- Three (3) Representatives from Richland County
- Two (2) Representatives from Kershaw County
- One (1) Representative from Calhoun County
- One (1) Representative for the five, small, local member governments (Springdale, Cayce, Lexington, West Columbia, Irmo) within Lexington County
- One (1) Representative of the Fixed Route Transit Service (CMRTA or designee)
- One (1) Representative of the disabled community (Advocacy group designee)

Technical Committee (Study Team)

The Technical Committee is made up of staff representatives of local jurisdictions and organizations involved in transportation planning and development at the local level. The function of the Technical Committee is critical to the provision of a more objective evaluation of potential projects and to assist the CMCOG staff in carrying out the planning process. The Technical Committee membership also includes multi-modal interests as required by federal legislation. The Committee is responsible for the review of transportation system improvements, intermodal connectivity, and transit recommendations for consideration to the Transportation Subcommittee and the MPO Policy Committee. The composition of the Technical Committee includes representatives from the following:

- CMCOG Transportation Planning
- CMCOG Planning and Research
- Lexington County Planning Staff
- Lexington County Public Works
- Richland County Planning Staff
- Richland County Public Works
- City of Columbia Traffic Engineering Staff
- City of Columbia Planning Staff
- Kershaw County Planning Staff
- SCDOT Office of Traffic Engineering
- SCDOT Office of Pre-Construction
- SCDOT Office of Planning and Environmental
- SCDOT Office of Public Transit
- Federal Highway Administration
- SC Department of Health & Environmental Control
- Columbia Metro Airport
- Central Midlands Regional Transit Authority
- Motor Freight Industry
- Rail Transportation Industry
- Lexington Co. "C" Fund Committee
- Richland Co. "C" Fund Committee
- Bicycle/Pedestrian Representative

- Optional:
 - Lexington School District 1 Planning Staff
 - Lexington School District 2 Planning Staff
 - Lexington/Richland School District 5 Planning Staff
 - Richland School District 1 Planning Staff
 - Richland School District 2 Planning Staff



ENCLOSURE 10

DATE: February 18, 2016
TO: CMCOG Board of Directors
FROM: Benjamin J. Mauldin, Executive Director
SUBJECT: Executive Director's Report

COG DIRECTORS' MEETING WITH KEY STATE BUDGET WRITERS

On February 18, the executive directors of all 10 SC COGs held their annual meetings with Senator Hugh Letterman regarding the FY 2017 State funding. In the past, these meetings have resulted in gradual increases in funding from the General Assembly. In recent years, funding has declined due to economic conditions. We have continued the meetings in order to thank the elected officials for their past support and remind them of the role of the COGs in economic development, planning and service delivery. This year, the 10 SC COGs requested funding to restore to the pre-recession years and explained how these dollars are used to match federal programs and allow us to pursue other funding opportunities to serve our constituents.

LEXINGTON COUNTY 2016 COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT BLOCK GRANT UPDATE

CMCOG staff applied for the following three (3) projects:

1. Town of Summit –Purchase park restrooms (Est. project total: \$62,330)
2. Town of Pelion – Purchase park restrooms (Est. project total: \$62,250)
3. Town of Pine Ridge –Spot Blight removal of 1 House (Est. project total: \$10,119)

CMCOG staff also assisted Brookland Baptist on its next BLEC Roof Phase application; City of Cayce on the next phase of the State Street Sewer; and Sistercare, LLC of Shelter I with the next phase of renovations.

Cyndi Gawronski, CDBG Manager cgawronski@cmcog.org, 803-744-5349

Eartha Burrell, Community Development Planner eburrell@cmcog.org, 803-744-5129

SOUTH CAROLINA RURAL INFRASTRUCTURE AUTHORITY – OFFICE OF RURAL GRANTS

The SC Rural Infrastructure Authority (RIA) makes grant assistance available in two program categories:

- **Basic Infrastructure:** Funding will assist communities in bringing facilities into compliance with environmental quality standards, protecting the public health from other environmental concerns or improving the capacity of existing infrastructure.
- **Economic Infrastructure:** Funding will help build local infrastructure capacity to support economic development that will create or retain jobs and boost opportunities for long-term sustainability of the community.

The maximum grant award for both categories is typically \$500,000. The SC Rural Infrastructure Authority's Board of Directors held its regularly scheduled meeting on November 9, 2015 and approved several grant applications, including a water system improvement grant for the Town of Winnsboro for \$500,000.

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CMCOG TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE SERVICES

In preparation for preparing our budget this year, we will be contacting local governments to remind them of the COG's capabilities to provide technical assistance. Under memoranda of agreement or contracts, we can prepare comprehensive plans and technical or policy studies, staff planning commissions, provide mapping and information management services, provide planning/zoning training for staff and appointed officials to meet State requirements and apply for and administer grants.

"CHOOSING LONG-TERM CARE PLACEMENT"

"Choosing Long-Term Care Placement" is a handbook created by the Central Midlands Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program. The handbook has been one of the most requested resources in that program. What is unique about the handbook is the experience and knowledge behind the information provided. Ms. Anna Harmon, Central Midlands Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program Director has over 25 years of long-term care experience. LaToya Buggs-Williams, Senior Ombudsman Investigator, and Fretoria Addison, Volunteer Program Coordinator, also use this handbook to help our volunteers become familiar with the long-term care process. This handbook has been requested by hospice agencies, hospitals, family members and home health care agencies to name a few. For a copy, feel free to contact Ms. Fretoria Addison at (803) 376-5389 or faddison@cmcog.org.

CENTRAL MIDLANDS AAA/ADRC

On February 18th, the Central Midlands Aging staff hosted their monthly series "Caring for the Caregivers: Education and Support Program" and 18 of our caregivers attended. These meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of every month to provide respite, resource information, and support to caregivers in the community.

This month our speaker was Teresa Player, a nurse from BeWell Home Services. Her overall topic of discussion was communication, but she specifically focused on journaling and its benefits for caregivers. Teresa discussed the different types of journaling as well as how they can get started. Teresa was very interactive with the caregivers, while introducing them to a new way of stress relief. Since our general focus in support group this year is self-care for caregivers, this topic gave them a simple, affordable and very beneficial option for taking time to care for themselves.

Next month, our speaker will be Steve Parrott, a co-owner of RetireEase, and he will discuss fall prevention and techniques caregivers can apply at home.

The Central Midlands AAA/ADRC has been very busy. A few other notable items:

- **A new partnership with the United Way 211 Call Center:** The LGOA, along with South Carolina's Area Agencies on Aging have partnered with United Way 211 in providing information and support to South Carolinians that call into their call center daily.
- **A new partnership with Harvest Hope Food Bank:** This will provide our Councils on Aging contractors free food when they receive food overages. This will benefit hundreds of seniors in our region who are on a fixed income and in need of fresh vegetables, fruits and bread products.
- **Project Lifesaver training:** In the end of March 2016, training will take place for sheriff departments in Lexington, Newberry and Fairfield Counties. Richland County is already using the Project Lifesaver service.



South Carolina Legislative Session

The South Carolina 2016 legislative session began January 12, 2016. CMCOG has identified several issues to be potentially addressed by the Legislature that may be of interest to our member governments.

Local Government Fund (LGF)

The Ways and Means Committee will take up the budget next week. It is important that all county officials contact their members of the General Assembly this week and talk to them about the importance of the LGF. There can be no excuse for the continued refusal to increase this vital source of county property tax relief. The state budget's projected recurring General Fund growth this year is 8.7 percent. The total **additional** funds available to the General Assembly this year equal \$1.3 **billion**.

The Governor allocated \$113 million additional money to fully fund the LGF in her executive budget. The Governor recognized that a failure to address the LGF presents a structural risk to state finances. These risks are apparent:

- The General Assembly's failure to increase the LGF leads to artificial increases in millage rates. These increases would often not be necessary, or at least would be less, if the LGF was funded in accordance with the statute.
- Counties house state agencies, and pay for—but have no control over—the Statewide Court System, including the courthouse, magistrates, public defenders, and solicitors. They also fund other state controlled agencies, like the county election commission. **Many counties are being told by state agencies that they need to house more state employees.** These items must be paid out of property taxes, unless other revenue is provided.
- Many counties are cutting important services to their communities because of the limited options available for budget reductions. Some cuts are not based on priority or need, but rather if the General Assembly mandates the service or not.

Roads — H. 3579

The Senate has now begun debating the roads bill(s) in earnest after trying for several weeks to allow a group working independently from the Senate floor debate to find a solution. There is no clear path forward at this time other than the idea that there will be three elements to any bill: (1) roads revenue, (2) DOT structural reform, and (3) tax relief to at least partially offset the gas tax increase. The one proposal which has gotten considerable discussion is the Cleary-Lourie proposal.

Alternative Energy Property Tax Exemption — S. 626

This bill creates two property tax exemptions for alternative energy generating projects, including solar, hydro, geothermal, wind, and landfill gas energy. The first provision is a 10

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year exemption of 80 percent of the value of the alternative energy equipment for commercial projects, which equates to a 2.1 percent assessment ratio. Any project that became operational in 2013 or 2014 would be eligible for the exemption beginning in property tax year 2016. The second provision entirely exempts all alternative energy equipment rated to produce 20 kW or less and defines these to be “residential” regardless of the class of property it is on. A taxpayer claiming this exemption may not also claim the manufacturing equipment abatement exemption. Finance Committee gave S. 626 a favorable report and it is pending second reading on the Senate calendar.

Municipal Incorporation — S. 163

A Senate Judiciary subcommittee amended the bill to provide that when a city is to be dissolved, the city’s assets and liabilities can be transferred to a county upon a two-thirds vote of the county delegation and the county council. The bill is silent as to what happens if a county refuses to accept the assets and liability. S. 163 received a favorable report as amended.

Energy income tax credit — H.3874

Provides an income tax credit to an individual or business that constructs, leases, or purchases certain solar energy property and places it in service in this state.

Building Fees — S.1068

Authorizes counties to increase building fees up to ten (10) percent and requires the proceeds to be used for affordable housing.