

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

January 8, 2019

A meeting of the Committee on Traffic and Transportation was held this date beginning at 2:03 p.m., at City Hall, 80 Broad Street, First Floor Conference Room.

Notice of this meeting was sent to all local news media.

PRESENT

Councilmember Seekings, Chair; Councilmember Wagner, Councilmember Moody, Councilwoman Jackson, and Mayor Tecklenburg **Staff:** Keith Benjamin, Robert Somerville, Rick Jerue, and Bethany Whitaker, Council Secretary **Also Present:** Councilmember Shahid, Kathryn Basha, Planning Director BCDCOG, Sarah Cox

The meeting was opened with a moment of silence provided by Councilmember Wagner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On the motion of Councilmember Moody, seconded by Councilwoman Jackson, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes of the November 26, 2018 meeting.

Application for Original Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity:

- *Classic Choice Limo, LLC (Limo)*
- *1st Class Limousine NJ, LLC (Limo)*

On the motion of Councilmember Moody, seconded by Councilwoman Jackson, the Committee voted unanimously to approve the above applications for Original Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity.

Berkeley-Charleston-Dorchester Council of Governments Long Range Transportation Plan Presentation

Mr. Benjamin said part of the reason he asked the BCDCOG to present was that they had done the hard work of getting through the City Transportation Plan, which was uniquely linked to this process. They wanted to make sure there was a full overview of the LRTP, how the City's priorities fit into the BCDCOG's priorities, and some of the focal points that came out of surveying and community outreach pieces.

Sarah Cox, BCDCOG, stated that they wanted to present an overview of the LRTP. They were in the final stages and the next steps would be to get it adopted. That would be done by the end of the month. The LRTP was federally required. It gave them the blueprint of strategies for infrastructure investments and helped them prioritize projects. They went through the process of updating because the region was growing and there were greater demands on the transportation system. They looked at the existing conditions and the committed projects they had being built or were funded. They added those additional links into the network and looked at the growth along the networks, as well as the demand. They looked at what they called vision projects and capacity enhancement projects including road widening and new roadways. They discovered that there was room to improve the system, but building their way out could not be the only solution. They would have to look at alternatives to implementing strategies, alternative modes, and shifting the demand off the roadways. That was why the Lowcountry Rapid Transit was so important. The process included project identification which consisted of looking at prior LRTP's to see what overlapped, what projects were already committed, as well as vision projects.

They added new projects to those base projects. Then, they went through public engagement which included symposiums, road shows, stake holder interviews/meetings, and online surveys with roughly 2,000 participants. They asked the community what they thought the most effective way was to reduce congestion and alternative modes, particularly a transit system, ranked high on the responses. Alternative modes of transportation including walking and biking were high priorities, as well. They asked how people moved around. In the downtown area, people mostly used transit, and alternative modes of transportation. They asked what the biggest transportation issue was and the main focus was transit options and increased connectivity. They also looked at what projects would be most important to focus on. For the LRTP, they were trying to balance demands and needs.

For project evaluation, they ran the projects across 12 criterion including things such as congestion relief, supporting transit, improves existing structure, etc. They had some overlaps, for example, safety may overlap with bike mobility. They looked at a multi-modal plan and went to a lot of effort to stress the multi-modal aspect and how they could link the modes better. They evaluated 139 roadway improvements. They covered a mixture of capacity enhancements, access management, corridor studies, and intersection improvements. The plan needed to be somewhat realistic fiscally. Next, they had to identify funding. They looked at things that carried over from the last plan and the average they would be getting in from Guideshare monies. It didn't account for County/ C-fund monies. They assumed roughly \$18 million per year for Guideshare through 2040, which gave them \$306 million and they also had committed \$1 million per year through Complete Streets. After reviewing the 139 projects, they pulled out 39 as priorities including 11 capacity enhancement projects, six access management projects, four corridor improvements, and 18 intersection improvements. They were looking at small fixes they could focus on. There would be 14 projects through 2030, and 15 through 2040. The only transit project in the capital list that would be fiscally constrained was the Lowcountry Rapid Transit project. They were looking at going into the federal process sometime this year, and through that they could make the one corridor the priority. There were 812 recommended pedestrian/bike projects. The bike/ped paths were associated with the road plans. The City Transportation Plans and the Long Range Transportation Plan overlapped in some areas and all of the City plans had made it into the LRTP.

Councilmember Moody asked when they went over the data, if there was any scientific basis for it. Ms. Cox stated that they could use qualitative measurement to make sense of the data. They mostly used open-ended questionnaires for this process. Mr. Benjamin stated that they also had traffic demand models that showed the data. Councilmember Moody said that whoever was present could participate though, and that was confirmed. Ms. Cox said that they tried to make the engagement regional and get as many groups as possible. Councilmember Moody asked when they would see these things being fixed and Chairman Seekings said the money was doled out slowly. They weren't massive projects. Councilmember Moody asked how it coordinated with the County's plans. Mr. Benjamin stated that part of his responsibility was making sure he was coordinating with all of the entities, which was why they had the monthly meetings. Some of the projects identified had already been picked up for funding by the County. They were not soliciting for random projects which helped get the projects done. This was a process that had to be updated every 4-5 years, so hopefully they could continually bring projects through that process.

West Ashley Connector Road

Mr. Benjamin stated that this would be going to Ways and Means. A couple of years previous, the City made an agreement with the County to take on some dollars to design the connector road off the West Ashley Circle into the residential neighborhood. To move forward with that, the Mayor asked for the Capital Projects team to move forward with the design of the road. They had moved forward. Stantec was the contractor. At Ways and Means, they would be asking for permission to execute the contract for design and move the design forward, in anticipation of ultimately asking for the dollars for construction. Councilmember Moody said he knew there was a drainage issue in that area with flooding and asked where the flooding mitigation was. He asked if they were making sure that they weren't doing something that would negatively affect the drainage. Mr. Benjamin said that had been a topic of conversation during the TRC process for Harris Teeter. They wanted to simplify the connection, as much as possible. Councilmember Wagner said that he was still confused as to what they were connecting to. Mr. Benjamin said that the design piece was what they were asking permission for, so that the specifics about where the roadway would be could be worked out. This was a TST ask from about two years ago, that they were moving forward with. Chairman Seekings said all they were doing was allocating money. Nothing had been designed yet, and at some point, it would be connected. Mayor Tecklenburg said they were designing the road so that they could design it and hopefully build it. They didn't have the funds for the build-out yet. Chairman Seekings asked what the time frame would be for the design and build-out. Mr. Benjamin said they were trying to get something as quickly as possible. However, once they did the design, it was a matter of where they could get the dollars from to build it. Chairman Seekings said that it would seem like they would need to coordinate with the flood-plain manager and the Director of Storm water Management to make sure it was all consistent and fit into the Church Creek area. Mr. Benjamin said that was correct. Mayor Tecklenburg said that they would consider those things for any road and this would come to the next Ways and Means, not that night.

Councilmember Shahid said that Plan West Ashley talked about connectivity issues, so as they designed the roads, connectivity for pedestrians, bikes, and neighborhoods was important. Mr. Benjamin said that for the Glenn McConnell Widening Project, they had agreed to do the full multi-use for the length of the widening project, and were taking account of it being a primary transit corridor in the future.

Director's Update

Mr. Benjamin said that they would be bringing close to 80 people together the next day for a regional conversation about Complete Streets and congestion from 9-4 at the Chamber. They could stop by. They were moving forward with the Line Street conversion and had a markings plan meeting the following week to finalize that. Last year, they had put in place a maintenance plan regarding signs and markings and were continuing to do that. They had done 2,000 the previous year, and wanted to increase that this year using the new technologies, tools, and the dollars they gave for training.

Having no further business, the Committee adjourned at 2:52 p.m.

Bethany Whitaker
Council Secretary