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A Publication of the Valdosta-Lowndes Metropolitan Planning Organization and the Southern Georgia Regional Commission
Volume II Issue 1 - August 2009

Economic Recovery Update

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 (ARRA) funding is beginning to flow to projects in Southern Georgia. This Economic Recovery funding is being allotted to projects by the Georgia Department of Transportation and MPO's throughout the State of Georgia.

In the Southern Georgia Regional Commission area the following communities/projects have been programmed or certified for funding.

Atkinson Co.	\$2,127,096
Bacon Co.	\$2,078,290
Brantley Co.	\$7,015,565
Charlton Co.	\$6,347,938
Clinch Co.	\$551,250
Coffee Co.	\$3,550,592
Cook Co.	\$4,263,368
Lanier Co.	\$3,390,094
Pierce Co.	\$2,364,863
Ware Co.	\$1,662,727
Rural Transit	\$5,611,256
Urban Transit	\$1,400,000

As more projects are prioritized and selected this list will continue to expand. For more information and complete project lists please visit the website at www.sgrc.us/transportation.



Metro 2035 Transportation Plan

Every four years Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) are required under federal law to update their long range regional transportation plans. This year the Valdosta-Lowndes MPO is undertaking an update to its Metro 2030 Transportation Plan, the new plan will be extended to cover the year 2035.

Projects completed from the 2030 Transportation Plan include the SR 122 Bridge (Little River) and Staten Road Bridges (Withlacoochee River).

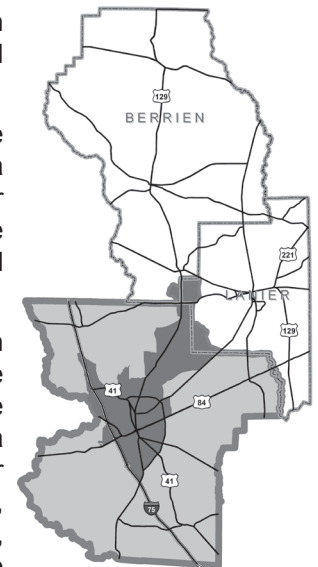
The MPO staff began the update of the Metro 2035 in the spring of 2009 working with planners from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) to update our Traffic Analysis Zones, or TAZ's (homogeneous land use areas that contain socioeconomic data used in the Travel Demand Modeling process, similar to Census Tracts).

This summer the MPO staff has been meeting with local jurisdictions and stakeholders to develop future growth maps. The MPO has also contracted with the Center for Business and Economic Research at Valdosta State University to develop base year and future year socioeconomic data. This data includes population, median household income, school enrollment, and retail, wholesale, service and manufacturing employment. The data VSU will produce will utilize various national, state and local data sources to arrive at good estimates for what the future of the region looks like.

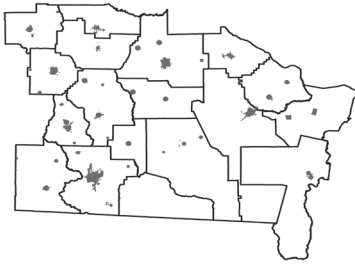
The data obtained from the future growth maps will be compiled and will be analyzed with the VALOR Geographic Information System data at the Southern Georgia Regional Commission. This analyzing will allocate the future growth throughout the county based on the areas were we were told by local officials where growth would occur and by how much growth will occur from the data provided by VSU. This allocation of growth will be applied to the TAZ's and input into the Travel Demand Model software that will show how roadway congestion is impacted by the future growth of the region. This data will then be used to implement and prioritize future projects.

The VLMPO Citizen's Advisory Committee has begun developing the goals, objectives and evaluation measures for the Metro 2035 Transportation Plan. These statements will guide the project prioritization and development processes. The new regional transportation plan will be adopted by the VLMPO Policy Committee in the summer of 2010.

For more information about this and other transportation programs visit www.sgrc.us/transportation.



Rural Transportation Planning in Southern Georgia



The merger of the South Georgia RDC and Southeast Georgia RDC has not changed the delivery of services for rural transportation planning in the new 18 county region. The Southern Georgia Regional Commission in partnership with the Georgia

Department of Transportation will continue to implement ongoing rural transportation projects.

This year the SGRC will be evaluating all of the Rural Public Transit programs in the region and will begin working on Transit Development Plans, first for counties that do not have such a plan, and then updating previously completed plans.

The SGRC staff will also be working with GDOT to promote the state and national Scenic Byways program in the region.

The popular bike and pedestrian planning program will continue, but the Transportation Enhancement and Safe Routes to School (SRTS) programs have been slightly modified. SGRC staff will be working closely with the newly created GDOT SRTS Resource Center and local schools to implement SRTS Plans and funding applications. The SGRC will also begin working on providing information to the region's children and adults about biking safety. The update of the regional bike and pedestrian master plan will also begin this year with a report of accomplishments.

For more information about these programs please contact David Morgan in Valdosta at dmorgan@sgrc.us or 229-333-5277.

Welcome

Welcome to the Valdosta-Lowndes Metropolitan Planning Organization newsletter. This newsletter is a tool to provide information to transportation stakeholders and the public about upcoming transportation improvements throughout Southern Georgia. The Southern Georgia Regional Commission is the designated Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Valdosta Urbanized Area.

MPO Policy Committee

Ashley Paulk, Lowndes County
Vance Smith, GDOT
John Fretti, City of Valdosta
Larry Hanson, City of Valdosta
Kenny Allen, City of Dasher
John Leonard, SGRC
Joe Pritchard, Lowndes County

MPO Staff

Corey Hull, MPO Coordinator
David Morgan, GDOT Planner

Upcoming Meeting Dates

Citizen's Advisory Committee
9/3/09, 10/8/09; 3:00 PM

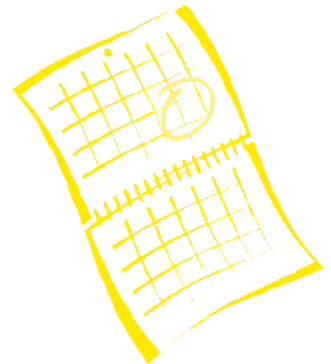
Technical Committee
9/8/09, 10/13/09; 10:30 AM

Policy Committee
9/8/09, 10/13/09; 1:30 PM

TIP Open House
9/15/09 9:00 AM - 7:00 PM

Meetings are typically held quarterly in March, June, September and December. All meetings are open to the public and held at the SGRC office unless otherwise indicated.

Visit our website at: www.sgrc.us/transportation and click on Public Participation for more Information.



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