



March 1, 2012

Re: Project Nos. STP00-3223-00(004)/BRMLB-3223-00-(006), SSTP00-3223-00(002), STP00-3223-00(005) and STP00-0000-00(835), Bibb County, P.I. Nos. 351090/351095, 342080, 351080 and 000835, Jeffersonville/Millerfield Road Project – Responses to Public Hearing Open House Comments

Thank you for your comments concerning the proposed project referenced above. We appreciate your participation and all of the input that was received as a result of the January 5, 2012 Public Hearing Open House (PHOH). Every written comment received and verbal comment given to the court reporter at the PHOH will be made part of the official record of the project.

A total of 102 people attended the PHOH. Of the 102 respondents who formally commented, 31 were in support of the project, 4 were opposed, 2 were uncommitted, and 4 expressed conditional support.

The attendees of the Open House and those persons sending in comments afterwards raised the following questions and concerns. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) has prepared this one response letter that addresses all comments received so that everyone can be aware of the concerns raised and the responses given. Please find the comments summarized below (*in italics*) followed by our response.

- *The Bike /pedestrian plan should continue to the Indian Mounds. There should not be a disconnect, so that you can get from the Indian Mounds all the way to the River at Martin Luther King bridge.*

The Bike/Pedestrian facilities shown on the plans are consistent with the approved 2003 Macon-Bibb County Bikeways & Pedestrian Plan. The Long Range Plan, however shows that continuing a bike/pedestrian route to the Indian Mounds would be beneficial. Therefore, a multi-use path for bikes and pedestrians will be added to the plans on Jeffersonville Road from Emery Hwy to Millerfield Road.

- *You should consider Roundabouts at intersection of Jeffersonville/Millerfield Roads.*

Roundabouts were not considered in the approved concept and preliminary plan stage. However, a preliminary analysis was conducted to determine the feasibility of placing a roundabout at this intersection. The results of the feasibility analysis showed that it would produce comparable LOS results as the proposed improved signalized intersection. However, the footprint of the roundabout would require more right-of-way than the proposed modification of the signalized intersection. Also, the right-of-way required for the

roundabout could potentially further impact historic resources on the approaches to the roundabout. There would also be an increase in the right-of-way cost for the roundabout option. In summary, the roundabout would improve traffic operations comparable to the improved signalized intersection; however, construction of the roundabout would incur additional right-of-way costs and also potentially further impact historic resources.

- *You should consider a two lane road with landscaped median and pedestrian friendly design.*

Traffic analysis shows that two travel lanes would not provide adequate traffic operations on Jeffersonville Road in the design year (2038).

A 14-foot paved two-way center turn lane is included along the entire length of the project on Jeffersonville Road. This continuous two-way center-turn lane would provide the most convenient area for motorists to get out of the travel way while turning left into the residential and commercial driveways that front Jeffersonville Road.

The proposed design would be a pedestrian friendly design that would include a sidewalk on the south side and a multi-use path on the north side of the roadway. Also, pedestrian crosswalks and pedestrian signals will be provided at the signalized intersections of the project to facilitate pedestrian movements across the roadway.

- *There is concern about the drainage on the project.*

The drainage plans for this project will be designed according to the recommended design standards of the GDOT and the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO).

- *Will trees be replanted if removed? Trees should be placed between the curb and the sidewalk to help protect pedestrians.*

There are no plans to replant trees within the proposed right- of-way at this time.

- *How do we know if our property will be taken?*

The right-of-way plans for the project can be viewed at Bibb County's Project Management Consultants Office (Moreland Altobelli Associates, Inc.) to verify the individual parcel requirements. Contact Steve Daniel, Macon Office of MAAI, 111 Third Street, Suite 230, Macon, GA 31201. Phone: 478-755-0000.

- *A traffic light is needed at McCall Rd.*

Traffic signal installations are determined based upon a traffic engineering study and compliance with a set of Warrants outlined in the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD). The intersection of Jeffersonville Road at McCall Road does not currently warrant a traffic signal.

Improvements and widening of Jeffersonville Road at McCall Road will reduce traffic delay at this side street intersection. The increased roadway capacity on Jeffersonville Road will provide more gaps in traffic and the two-way center-turn median lane would provide separate space for traffic turning onto McCall Road. Also, sight distance will be greatly improved as a result of the project in general.

- *The project is much needed.*

Comment is noted.

- *When will the project start/ be constructed?*

The project is scheduled to begin construction in 2015.

- *GDOT guidelines instruct that traffic projections must be most heavily weighted to the historical trend of the past five years. This trend has been flat. It is absurd to project traffic to increase from 10,000 vehicles per day to 10,000 by 2018 and to 17,000 by 2038. Traffic projections have proven miserably inaccurate for the Houston Road and Forest Hill Road projects. The population growth in Bibb county does not correlate to the traffic projections.*

The traffic counts/projections were conducted according to GDOT policy and procedures. Specifically, the traffic projections for the Jeffersonville-Millerfield project were based on historical traffic data and the Macon Area Transportation Study (MATS) model. MATS is the metropolitan planning organization (MPO) that is responsible for the comprehensive metropolitan planning process required by Title 23 U.S.C. 134. The MATS model is a regional travel demand model that takes into account population growth and demographic and socio-economic data of the entire region.

Further information about traffic projections for this project is available from the Macon MPO. Contact Macon-Bibb County Planning & Zoning Commission at www.maconbibbpz.org.

- *Five lanes are not needed; there is not that much traffic.*

Traffic analysis was conducted using Highway Capacity Software based upon the *Highway Capacity Manual 2010*, which is the current state-of-the-practice document for analyzing traffic capacity. The results of the analysis showed that for 2011, 2018 and 2038 traffic conditions on Jeffersonville Road from Emery Hwy to Emery Road would operate at Level of Service (LOS) E without the project and LOS A or B with the project. LOS E represents capacity conditions and constrained traffic flow, whereas LOS A or B represent free flow or nearly free flow conditions.

- *The project only needs turn lanes and sidewalks, and repaving.*

See response above.

- *Moving east on Jeffersonville past the railroad bridge, the road narrows from five to three lanes up to the Emery Highway intersection. Why? Does traffic drop off that dramatically?*

Traffic studies show that approximately 57 percent of the southbound design year 2038 traffic volume either turns left onto Emery Road heading away from Macon or turns right onto Emery Road. Because of the amount of traffic projected to turn from southbound Jeffersonville Road onto Emery Road, the two-lane section south of Emery Road would be able to accommodate the future projected traffic volumes without any further improvements.

- *Is there another project planned on Jeffersonville Road south of Emery Highway to Geico?*

No project is presently planned to widen Ocmulgee East Blvd from Jeffersonville Road south to Geico.

- *Road repair is needed on Jeffersonville Road from the Indian mound to the underpass.*

Although the proposed project would significantly improve the pavement condition, it is the responsibility of the City of Macon to maintain the roadway's pavement condition until construction begins. Your comment will be forwarded to the Mayor of Macon for further consideration.

- *Five lanes would make too much noise.*

A noise impact assessment was prepared in accordance with our current noise policy. Although the future noise levels along the project would exceed the noise abatement criteria, noise barriers were found not to be reasonable because the numerous openings required for points of access (e.g. driveways, cross streets) would render a barrier ineffective.

- *The 57 homes stated as being impacted by noise should be bought to mitigate the noise problem.*

The purchase of homes for the mitigation of noise is not considered a reasonable measure.

- *How will the 22 eligible Historic resources be mitigated or protected?*

The DOT and The State Historic Preservation Office have reviewed these resources and coordinated with the respective federal, state, and local agencies to determine the appropriate mitigation measures. These measures have been included in a Memorandum of Agreement that has been signed by the agencies and include the following: Photo documentation of the Bell Homeplace, Whitfield House, Cross Keys Baptist Church, Williams House, Duke House, Edmundson House and Ray house; Landscape plans will be created for the Bell Homeplace, Whitfield House, Cross Keys Baptist Church, Williams House, Duke House, Edmundson House and Ray house; and Photo documentation of the Walnut Creek Bridge and substructure will be done.

- *There needs to be another meeting that involves a presentation and a question and answer session.*

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We believe the informal meeting style is the most effective format for soliciting feedback from and providing information to the general public. Based on our experience, most people seem to appreciate the informal format and the face-to-face discussions. It should be noted that GDOT also responds in writing to the open house comments received on all its projects. This is intended to partially substitute for the question and answer session that occurs at formal meetings and it allows everyone to be aware of the documented issues and concerns raised by other citizens.

- *We were not aware of the January 5, 2012 meeting.*


We regret if anyone was unaware of the open house. We made a good faith effort to make the public aware of this event. It was advertised on three local TV stations: WMGT-TV, Fox 24/ABC 16, and WMAZ-TV. It was also advertised in "The Telegraph," a local newspaper. Lastly, signs were posted along the project corridor for twenty-one days leading up to the meeting.

- *The web site did not have information available as stated.*

We sincerely apologize for this oversight. As soon as the mistake was brought to our attention, it was corrected and the materials were posted.

Again, thank you for your comments concerning this project. Should you have any further questions, comments, or concerns, please call the project manager, Kevin VanHouten, at (706) 646-6972 or the environmental analyst, Bobby Dollar, at (404) 631-1920.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Glenn Bowman/mn".

Glenn Bowman, P.E.
State Environmental Administrator

GB/ts

cc: Kevin VanHouten, GDOT Project Manager