

Executive Committee
Public Meeting Comments

Roundtable Members:

The following are a list of attendees and public comments received through the public meeting process to review the proposed project list. Three public meetings were held in the region to share the list and all meetings were advertised in all legal organs in the region. Each meeting discussed the process, the timing and the list proposed by the TIA Roundtable Executive Committee and delivered by the GDOT Planning Director. These public comments are being delivered to you prior to the TIA Roundtable meeting on December 15.

Thank you,

Jim Livingston
River Valley Regional Commission

Cuthbert – November 15

Darrell Holbrook
Lewis Shingles
Bobby Jenkins
Wesley Williams

Rayetta Volley
Laura Bussey
Carvel Lewis

Public Comments Received:

- Carvel Lewis – *Randolph County project for Cotton Hill was not listed.* (Randolph County portion of Cotton Hill Road)

Montezuma – November 16

Ivy Oliver
Grant Buckley
Bill Dudley
Myron Mixon
Roselyn H Starling
Mickey George
Barry Blount

Johnny Brooks
Walter Turner
Kelvin C. Lewis
Valery Davis
Bob Melvin
Judith Volner

Public Comments Received:

- Dylan Frandsen , Randolph County Sheriffs Dept.– *Ga Highway 83 needs to be redone from mile marker 16 to 20 due to holding water. Lots of wrecks.*
- Judith Volner, Dooling Mayor – *It was very informant. Understand how the monies are handled.*
- Walter Turner – *Lots of hard work is obvious here. Having to cut out other deserving projects is difficult.*
- Grant Buckley – *Good list! Go for it!*

Columbus – November 18

Pops Barnes

Robert Sheridan

Rosa Evans

Pam Hodge

Joshua Abercombie

Laure Lee Bernstein

George Miles

Becky Langston

John Doh

Nia Williams

Bruce Huff

Nancy Glynn

Gregg Fisher

Harry Lange

Tony O. Lamar

Toyia Tucker

Skip Henderson

Public Comments Received:

- Becky Langston, Harris County Commissioner, District 3
State Route 315 Improvements from Hart Drive - This is a project located off I-185. An area with a great deal of residential development currently on-going. Within the next 20 years – one of the developments will be completed – 2500 residences. Currently there are approximately 500+ planned residences. Hwy 315 is a major route to I-185. This stretch of roads needs an upgrade to support planned/current development.

State Route 315/219/Goat Rock Road – GDOT has already approved a roundabout at this very dangerous intersection. The county has agreed to maintain the roundabout. This intersection is a deadly one – we recently had a traffic death there and hardly a week goes by without a serious accident. Please consider the project because of safety issues.

- Anonymous – *Doesn't Columbus need more than 1 bus transfer station*

Public Comments Received via email:

Becky Langston – Harris County

Randy -

The proposed timeline for the 3 projects is as follows along with budget amounts:

Roundabout at 219/315 - 2023-2026 - \$5,000,000

Rails to Trails - 2023-2026 - \$4,000,000

315 Improvements off Exit 19 - 2027-2029 - \$7,000,000

The roundabout and rails to trails are both Band 1 projects and the 315 improvements are Band 2 projects.

Needless to say, the traffic improvements on 315 are going to be required sooner rather than later. With the amount of development currently in progress and future development on tap, the traffic issue is a great need already on 315.

I request that the timeline for the 315 project be readjusted to a Band 1 project -

2023-2026.

Becky Langston
HC Commissioner, District 3

Randy Dowling – Harris County Manager:

...the priority order of Harris County's three TSPLOST projects were submitted in the order below. Apparently, the order got rearranged on the draft investment list. Can the project order be put back to the original order as set forth below? Thank you. RD

SR 315/219/Goat Rock round-about

*SR 315 widening and turn lane improvements from Hart Drive to Hamilton Mulberry Grove Road
some miles for the Man O' War RR Recreation Trail*

Bobby Jenkins – Cuthbert:

*TIA Hearing Comments
November 15, 2021
Cuthbert, GA*

I want to express my thanks to our officials for this opportunity to provide input on work to be done in Randolph County funded by the 1% T-SPLOST. The budgetary support for counties and cities from the 1% sales tax is invaluable to those entities and supports their work on repairing and resurfacing roads in their area. The sales tax allows tourists and visitors to contribute to the improvements of this area and region, and lowers the local match for state funded road projects. I support the funding mechanism in place to make improvements to this highway and other roads in this region, and, I will advocate for renewing of the 1% T-SPLOST in 2022.

Highway 82 Passing Lanes

This highway is vital to the growth and viability of Cuthbert and other towns along this route. I wholeheartedly endorse the idea of adding passing lanes to 82 which serves as a start for this important corridor to have 4 lanes in the future. One need only stand on our square in Cuthbert and count the traffic traveling on 82. A significant portion of that traffic consists of 18 wheelers. There is a significant amount of farming that occurs along 82 East between Cuthbert and Shellman. When the farm traffic is combined with the heavy car and truck traffic, it becomes a safety issue for 82 to continue as just a 2-lane road. I would suggest that additional passing lanes be added between Shellman and Cuthbert to increase traffic safety.

Cotton Hill Road

This road serves as a direct route for many citizens who are headed to the lake in Clay County. A significant number of vehicles are pulling boats, trailers, and campers. In addition to residents who live along this route, there are at least 5 churches along this route which adds to the constant traffic flow. Improvements and widening are greatly needed to enhance traffic safety.

Bobby Jenkins

bjenkins512@windstream.net

Mac Moye

Stewart County Manager:

Good morning, Commissioners, Mayors, City Officials, staff, and interested citizens,

The elected officials in the county and cities received an email this morning from Jim Livingston of the RVRC, detailing the TIA executive committee's recommendations for the "TIA Investment List." These are regional projects that commissions and councils applied for. Stewart County applied for two of these---rail extension and Hospital Road.

Also in Jim's email is a document which details the projected "discretionary distribution" for each jurisdiction. This money is allocated mostly according to miles' of existing local roads in each jurisdiction.

I want to summarize the two documents here and bring back around to you the crucial meaning of these funds.

I. The Regional Projects (Background).

The Stewart County Commission applied for two projects:

- a. An extension of the rail line, which currently runs from Cordele to Preston, for tourism. We proposed a two-phased approach to the project, at a total cost of \$39,200,000:
 - 1. Preston to Richland; and,*
 - 2. Richland to Omaha.**
- b. The re-surfacing of Hospital Road and Sundown Road into Webster County in two phases:
 - 1. From Georgia 27 to the junction of Sundown Road; and,*
 - 2. From the junction of Hospital Road on Sundown Road; thence into Webster County to its termination on Centerpoint Road.**

Our Regional Project on the Executive Committee's Proposal List:

The rail extension project did NOT make it onto the executive committee's recommended list.

The Hospital Road re-surfacing project DID make it onto the executive committee's recommended list (\$1,965,000). I've attached a copy of our proposal for your review.

II. Projected TIA Distributions by Jurisdiction.

- 1. Stewart County Commission: \$5,998,743.34*
- 2. City of Richland: \$501,999.67*
- 3. City of Lumpkin: \$389,373.45*

Next Actions:

- A. The RVRC will hold three public hearings, two near us:
 - 1. Cuthbert on November 15 at 6 pm; and,**

2. Columbus on November 18 at 6 pm.
- B. The TIA Roundtable will then meet on December 15 in Buena Vista to “approve or amend the Draft Investment List.”
- C. TIA 2023-2032 will be on the ballot in May, 2022.

Meaning.

Only three regions in Georgia approved the one-cent sales tax which funded TIA 2012---Central Savannah, Heart of Georgia, and River Valley (RVRC). Every elected official in those three regions today knows how critical TIA funds have been to our road departments over the last ten years.

I can't speak directly for the cities, but I can attest that TIA 2012 has greatly facilitated the county's maintenance of our 715 miles' worth of roads and operations. TIA has even allowed us to make some progress for the citizens. Some of our heavy equipment, for example, was purchased with TIA funding. That's an extraordinary value that TIA has brought to this rural Stewart County over the last ten years.

Richland and Lumpkin have a combined total of 32.2 miles' of roads to maintain, and so the TIA funding is vital for the cities as well.

The Vote.

We who have responsibility for our road systems have an inherent understanding of how important this funding is for our operations. Never forget that the public does not think about good roads, but they are VERY aware of bad roads.

It could hardly be more important, therefore, for us in the RVRC area to have a unified message to the voting public about the critical importance of the vote for the 1% sales tax that TIA 2022 requires. Once again, that vote comes up in May of next year.

Summary.

The two components of 2022 TIA benefiting Stewart County directly, then, are the Hospital Road project and the discretionary funds that go directly to Richland, Lumpkin, and the Stewart County Commission.

These projects, totaling \$8,855,116.46 over ten years, still must pass public review in November of this year and the ballot in May, 2022.

Please prepare to express unified support for these projects in all public and private forums.