



April 11, 2017
P.I. No. 752015-; Fulton County
CS 1868/Courtland Street @CSX RR/Marta/Decatur Street

Helen Barnes, Associate Attorney
Brian Gist, Senior Attorney
Southern Environmental Law Center
10 10th Street NW, Suite 1050
Atlanta, GA 30309-3848

Re: Complete Streets in the Courtland Bridge Replacement Project - Response

Dear Ms. Barnes and Mr. Gist:

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) acknowledges your letter dated March 17, 2017, indicating concerns regarding the Courtland Street Bridge replacement project. The project is currently scheduled to be let in July 2017. This project is a replacement of a structurally deficient bridge on Courtland Street, which is owned by the City of Atlanta (COA).

Courtland Street is an urban corridor that is owned and operated by COA. GDOT has committed to replacing the Courtland Street Bridge, which comprises a portion of that corridor, in kind. From the initiation of the project, GDOT has maintained a consistent approach of replacing a structurally deficient bridge without changing operations to the COA roadway network. The proposed typical section is to remain a 4-lane urban section with a transit lane accommodation. Changes to the operations of an urban corridor would require traffic studies for the entire corridor and a NEPA document addressing the project limits associated with that entire corridor, along with the accompanying public involvement and comments associated with the NEPA process. The requirements for a corridor study to modify the operations of the entire Courtland Street corridor would be outside of the scope, schedule, and budget of a bridge replacement project of this type.

The schedule for this bridge replacement project is a critical element in the project's success and GDOT has addressed this issue by transitioning the project to use a Design-Build delivery alternative. The current proposed schedule includes restricting the Courtland Street Bridge maximum-closure duration to 6 months or less, with an overall contract duration of 18 months. In order to complete construction during this aggressive construction schedule, GDOT has proposed that the Design-Build Team utilize specialized Accelerated Bridge Construction techniques to replace the structurally deficient bridge.

This bridge replacement project involves numerous constraints to the design and construction process due to the proximity of existing buildings, railroad and transit corridors, and its location within an urban university campus. GDOT has held several stakeholder meetings and has maintained continuous coordination and updates as the project has progressed through the Design-Build procurement phase. Stakeholders involved in the coordination include the COA, Georgia State University (GSU), CSX, MARTA, other local transit agencies, and the Georgia Building Authority (GBA). Concerns of the general public have also been addressed through the public involvement included in the NEPA document process.

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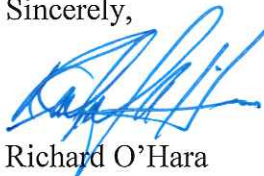
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Stakeholder coordination with GSU, Central Atlanta Progress, and COA has included discussion regarding incorporating wider sidewalks, bike lane additions, and lane reductions into the project. Throughout this coordination, GDOT consistently committed to not preclude these additions into future projects proposed by COA and other various stakeholders.

Following the transition by GDOT to the Design-Build alternative, and through the continued coordination with stakeholders, GDOT was recently presented alternative typical sections for a programmed future project to accommodate wider sidewalks, bike lanes, and a lane reduction on the Courtland Street corridor. COA presented three options for consideration and GDOT has agreed to include the preferred option into the project by widening the south sidewalk to a consistent 8-foot width (varying in some places up to 9.5 feet). (See enclosure.) This approach allows for an efficient transition to reduce the lanes and install buffered bike lanes as part of the future COA project. GDOT will contract with the Design-Build Team to replace the Courtland Street Bridge and maintain a 4-lane configuration to match the existing operations. The contract will stipulate the use of temporary striping so that the bridge section can more easily accommodate the future bike lane project throughout the corridor.

GDOT is committed to continually working with our partners in order to make the Courtland Street Bridge Replacement project a success. If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact me at (404) 631-1169 or ro'hara@dot.ga.gov.

Sincerely,



Richard O'Hara
Project Manager
Office of Innovative Delivery

Enclosure: City of Atlanta, RENEW Atlanta letter


DVM:CAH:RCO

cc: Russel McMurry, P.E., Commissioner, GDOT
Meg Pirkle, Chief Engineer, GDOT
K. Joe Carpenter, Director of P3 Delivery, GDOT
Katelyn DiGioia, Bike & Pedestrian Coordinator, GDOT
Xavier James, Project Manager, GDOT
Faye DiMassimo, City of Atlanta
Mark Becker, President, GSU
A.J. Robinson, President, Central Atlanta Progress
Rodney Barry, Division Administrator, FHWA