January 17, 2007

Becky Kelley, Director
State Parks & Historic Sites Division
Georgia Department of Natural Resources
2 MLK Jr. Drive
Suite 1352 East
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

RE: SAFETEA-LU Consultation Process

Dear Mrs. Kelley:

As a result of the enactment of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) must implement a consultation process with state and local resource agencies by July 1, 2007. Specifically, Section 6001 [G], requires each MPO to consult “as appropriate” with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation” in developing long-range transportation plans and transportation improvement programs.

The Macon Area Transportation Study (MATS) is the MPO for Bibb and Jones Counties in Middle Georgia. MATS recognizes your agency as one such entity in which to consult. Please take a moment to carefully review the information provided in this packet and make appropriate comments regarding any concerns your agency may have.

Your comments may be submitted in a standard written correspondence or by electronic means via e-mail. Please endeavor to have your comments submitted by February 19, 2007. Thank you for your time in this matter.

Sincerely,

Gregory T. Floyd
Planner
478-751-7464
gfloyd@mbpz.org

Enclosures (3) and 1 CD-ROM
cc: Vernon B. Ryle III, Executive Director
    James P. Thomas, Assistant Executive Director
March 6, 2007

Gregory T. Floyd
Macon-Bibb County Planning & Zoning Commission
682 Cherry Street
Suite 1000
Macon, Georgia 31201

Dear Mr. Floyd:

This is in reply to your letter, dated February 9, 2007, to Dr. Carol Couch, Director of the Environmental Protection Division (EPD) of the Georgia Department of Natural Resources. Your letter solicits comment on the Macon Area Transportation Study's (MATS) approach to meeting SAFETEA-LU environmental mitigation and consultation requirements and the MATS long-range transportation plan (LRTP). EPD appreciates the opportunity to make the following comments.

The maps and spreadsheets included with your letter describing LRTP projects do not provide sufficient detail to enable EPD to identify specific project-level environmental issues and concerns. Rather, EPD urges MATS to implement the action plan described in the MATS approach to meeting SAFETEA-LU environmental mitigation and consultation requirements. Specifically, in addition to the comparison of LRTP projects with inventories of historic and natural resources, EPD encourages the use of the Potential Environmental Impacts & Mitigation Measures guidance under development by the Georgia Department of Transportation (contact Angela Alexander at 404-656-5411). As addressed in our comments during the development of this guidance, EPD recommends the use of mitigation measures that avoid or minimize impacts rather than those that repair or restore the affected environment. Also, EPD strongly recommends compliance with best management practices for stormwater management and erosion control to protect Georgia's streams and water quality.

Thank you, again, for the opportunity to provide comments on the MATS approach to meeting SAFETEA-LU environmental mitigation and consultation requirements and on the projects in the LRTP. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 404-657-5419 or at marlin_gottschalk@dnr.state.ga.us.

Sincerely,

Marlin R. Gottschalk, Ph.D.
Chief of Policy Coordination

MRG:sc
March 12, 2007

Gregory T. Floyd, Planner
Macon-Bibb County Planning & Zoning Commission
682 Cherry Street, Suite 1000
Macon, GA 31201

RE: SAFETEA-LU Consultation Process

Dear Mr. Gregory:

Thank you for the information you recently submitted to our office concerning MPO consultation with resource agencies as mandated by the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). This information will be useful to us in better understanding the larger planning framework for individual transportation projects in your area. Due to the highly generalized nature of this information, we are unable to make project-specific comments at this time.

Please keep in mind that your agency may have obligations under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and the Georgia Environmental Policy Act of 1991 (GEPA). As you may know, these laws require consideration of historic and archaeological resources in planning for specific transportation projects that receive federal or state funding or require federal permits. As project-specific planning advances, the federal or state agency responsible for funding or permitting will consult with our office to determine if historic and archaeological resources have been appropriately considered. Our office strongly recommends similar consideration of historic resources for locally funded transportation projects.

We would like to note that our office maintains extensive paper files and electronic databases documenting historic and archaeological resources in the state which should be taken into account in assessing the environmental impacts of proposed transportation projects. Our files are readily available for use by your agency and its agents as needed.

Please contact Amanda Schraner, Transportation Projects Coordinator, at (404) 463-6687 if you have questions.

Sincerely,

Richard Cloues
Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer

RC:als
Greg Floyd

From: Blocker, Shaun L SAS [Shaun.L.Blocker@sas02.usace.army.mil]
Sent: Monday, April 16, 2007 2:18 PM
To: Greg Floyd

Subject: Response to your MATS request

Gregory,

In response to your letter dated March 28, 2007, we regulate Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (fill in wetlands and streams). A jurisdictional delineation would be required for these projects to determine if any of the proposed projects would have any jurisdictional impacts. Impacts to wetlands (herbaceous and forested) and streams (below the Ordinary High Water Mark) would require a permit from our office, and possibly also require compensatory mitigation for project impacts. I am going to encourage you to visit our web-site at http://www.sas.usace.army.mil/permit.htm and read the information within the site.

Shaun L. Blocker
Project Manager, Piedmont Branch
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Savannah District
1590 Adamson Parkway, Suite 200
Morrow, Georgia 30260-1777
(678) 422-6570 / Fax (678) 422-2734