

Work Session Meeting of the Sandy Springs City Council was held on Tuesday, October 18, 2016, at 9:30 p.m., Mayor Rusty Paul presiding.

Councilmembers present: Council Member John Paulson, Council Member Ken Dishman, Council Member Gabriel Sterling, Council Member Tibby DeJulio, and Council Member Andy Bauman. Council Member Chris Burnett was absent.

STAFF DISCUSSION ITEMS

Public Works

1. **16-399** Study Results for Use of Law Enforcement for Managing Rush Hour Traffic at Business Driveways in PCID

Transportation/Traffic Unit Manager France Campbell presented the Peachtree Dunwoody Road Travel Time and Delay Study PowerPoint. The study was conducted by AECOM, at the request of Council, to study the impact of police officers directing traffic on Peachtree Dunwoody Road at the Newell Rubbermaid, Embassy Row and Northpark Town Center parking deck driveways. The data collected included travel time runs along the corridor from the North Springs MARTA Station on the north to Mount Vernon Highway on the south. To measure travel time, the method involved a normal car driving along the roadway, trying to maintain an average travel speed with other vehicles. This was done during the afternoon peak hours of 4pm to 6pm. For a travel time comparison, data was collected both with police officers directing traffic at the three driveways, and when police officers were not directing traffic. To keep people from changing their travel patterns, the City did not communicate with the public when police officers would and would not be directing traffic.

With police control, the average delay incurred by vehicles exiting the Newell Rubbermaid office increased by 2.7 seconds or 6.2% (Table 1, Summary of Newell Rubbermaid Driveway Delay Data, page 3). This could be due to the officers looking for breaks and holding traffic back, and then signaling the vehicles. The 2.7 seconds is not much of a difference.

With police control, average travel times along Peachtree Dunwoody Road (north Springs MARTA station to Mount Vernon Highway) decreased by 7 seconds or 2.3% (Table 2, Summary of Peachtree Dunwoody Road Travel Time Data Summary, page 4).

A consideration is what police presence means to drivers. With police present, drivers tend to drive a bit safer and a little less erratic. The consultant witnessed a dramatic increase in risky driving in motorists when police were not present. It is noted in the report that sometimes when vehicles were turning left out of Newell Rubbermaid onto Peachtree Dunwoody, motorists often treated the two-way left turn lane, or suicide lane, as another driving lane. This is a safety concern, especially at Embassy Row, where someone may be waiting to turn left onto Peachtree Dunwoody. The consultant recommends continuing to allow the police officers to direct traffic at the studied intersections. They also recommend that the City continue to work with the PCID (Perimeter Community Improvement Districts) PTOP (perimeter traffic operations program) to ensure Peachtree Dunwoody Road has adequate signal time at the Abernathy Road intersection.

Council Member Gabriel Sterling asked if the lights under PTOP were directed by the City's system or a different system.

Transportation/Traffic Unit Manager Campbell responded that the PTOP traffic signals are monitored by the City, but the PCID makes the changes to the traffic signals through PTOP consultants Kimley-Horn.

Council Member Sterling stated that he was under the impression that the City managed those signals, and asked if it would make sense for the City to manage the traffic signals, rather than the PCID.

Transportation/Traffic Unit Manager Campbell stated that he believed the current method of management of the traffic signals is very effective.

Council Member John Paulson stated he also believed that those traffic signals were under the City's control.

Chief Program Officer Jennifer Harper of the PCID said that the PCID is in the fourth year of the PTOP. At the time the program was created, the three jurisdictions decided that it was more beneficial to operate the business district as a system, rather than multijurisdictional. In that discussion, it was recognized that Roswell Road was already managed with oversight and services, as well as Peachtree Industrial in the City of Brookhaven. PTOP goes between these two corridors and ties them together. Everything in the middle is managed by PTOP, which includes seven signals in the PCID.

Council Member Sterling asked what level of traffic control does PTOP have outside of changing the lights.

Chief Program Officer Harper responded that at this point every signal within PTOP intended to be connected with fiber is connected. No additional signals will be connected. Through PTOP, the Dunwoody and Brookhaven signals can be monitored by the Sandy Springs Traffic Management Center (TMC). There are some outlier signals that are too far to be connected. These signals are on GPS clocks, so they do not need to be connected through fiber. Redundancies have been put in for assurances. Currently the PCID is running time-of-day plans on all signals, but there are active plans to go to traffic-responsive and adaptive technologies in some areas.

Council Member Sterling stated it would be helpful to have a visual map showing what exists, what the plans are, and who manages the traffic signals.

Chief Program Officer Harper stated that in the PTOP, the jurisdictions work as a committee. The City of Sandy Springs is represented by Traffic Services Manager Bill Andrews, Assistant City Manager Bryant Poole and other staff. The City of Dunwoody, the City of Brookhaven and the PCID's staff also attend the monthly coordination meetings. During these meetings, the committee discusses what needs to be done as a whole, such as timing changes, issues, customer complaints and new densities. PTOP consultants then take this information and tweak the system as necessary. For example, PCID just learned during the day's PTOP meeting that the City of Sandy Springs has an adaptive system coming onboard at Peachtree Dunwoody, and PTOP traffic management plans will be adjusted around the City's investment.

Each afternoon there is a team of engineers managing the system. As a committee, the best decisions are made together. PTOP plans are revisited yearly. Each year, the PTOP engineers meet with each jurisdiction individually to exchange ideas. It is a very collaborative, ongoing effort funded by GDOT. The grant covers the costs of consultants and repairs within the system, although the Cities are responsible for any new infrastructure investments.

Transportation/Traffic Unit Manager Campbell stated the PTOP is a great benefit. Staff participates in the monthly meetings.

Council Member Sterling stated that he appreciates all that the PCID is doing to help move traffic along in that area, which is the biggest employment center in the southeast. A visual map would be helpful to Council in order to reassure their constituents that everything possible is being done. Expanding the fiber network, and taking full advantage of adaptive traffic signal technologies, as much as possible, will help to eliminate some human error. The work being done in this area is very much appreciated.

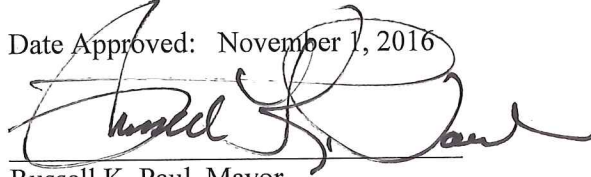
Chief Program Officer Harper stated last month the consultants recommended changes to the Northpark area managed under PTOP. The recommendations included the addition of a right, green arrow to the Peachtree Dunwoody at Abernathy signal, as well as coordinating with area property owners to discuss what can be done on their campuses to support change at the signal. For example, it was recommended

that property managers can assist by moving traffic out in a different way such as making private drives one-way in the afternoon to empty onto a less congested Mount Vernon. Jurisdictions can put in signal infrastructure and adjust signal timing, and work with property managers to support PTOP efforts. The PCID can return at a future time and provide a PTOP presentation to Council that may show a map of fiber and infrastructure, as well as discuss how program dollars are spent.

It was the consensus of Council to resume police directing traffic on Peachtree Dunwoody Road at the Newell Rubbermaid, Embassy Row and Northpark Town Center parking deck driveways.

There being no further discussion, the meeting adjourned at 9:45 p.m.

Date Approved: November 1, 2016



Russell K. Paul, Mayor



Michael D. Casey, City Clerk