



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

**TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

**MPC Jerry Surrency Conference Room
110 East State Street**

April 19, 2007

3:00 P.M.

Voting Members

Representing

Present

Russ Abolt	Chatham County	
Allan R. Black, P.E.	Chatham County Engineering	X
Robert H. Bonner Jr.	LDH Corporation	
Daniel Bostek	Norfolk Southern Railroad Industry	
Michael Brown	City of Savannah	
Al Bungard, P.E.	Chatham County Engineering	
Robbie Byrd	City of Pooler	
Phillip Claxton	City of Port Wentworth	
Scott Conner	CSX Transportation	
Anne de la Sierra	Fort Steward/Hunter Army Airfield	
Glenn Durrence	GDOT – District 5	
Patrick S. Graham	Savannah Airport Commission	
Brian Leighton	CUTS Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation	X
Doug J. Marchand	Georgia Ports Authority	
Kyle Mote	GDOT – Atlanta	X
Carl Palmer	Chatham Area Transit Authority	
Russ Peterson	CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee	
Tricia Reynolds	Coastal Georgia RDC	
Diane Schleicher	City of Tybee Island	
Peter Shonka, P. E.	City of Savannah Engineering	
Bob Thomson	Thunderbolt	
Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP	Executive Director MPC, Chair	X
Hugh "Trip" Tollison	Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce	
Mike Weiner, P.E.	City of Savannah Engineering	
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP	MPO	X
<u>Voting Member Alternates</u>	<u>Representing</u>	
George Fidler	Savannah Airport Commission	X
Stephen Henry	City of Savannah – Traffic Engineering	X
Teresa Scott	GDOT – District 5	X
Randy Weitman	Georgia Ports Authority	X

Others Present

Tommy Crochet
Latoya Jones
Jane Love
Constance Morgan
Radney Simpson
Wykoda Wang

Representing

McGee Partners X
FHWA X
MPO X
MPC X
GDOT X
MPO X

I. Approval of Agenda

The April 19, 2007 meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee was called to order by Mr. Tom Thomson. Approval of the agenda was moved and seconded.

II. Action Items

A. Approval of the February 22, 2007 CUTS TCC Meeting Minutes

Mr. Thomson called for the approval of the February 22, 2007 minutes. There being no corrections, it was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2007 Technical Coordinating Committee Meeting.

TCC Action: the motion to approve the minutes of the February 22, 2007 Technical Coordinating Committee Meeting carried with none opposed.

B. Endorsement of CUTS Participation Plan

Ms. Wykoda Wang explained the MPO's Participation Plan. She stated that MPO staff worked with the consultant RS&H to develop the Participation Plan and she briefly highlighted the major revisions made to the plan. She concluded that the plan is expected to be adopted by the Citizens Advisory Committee on April 19, 2007 and by the Policy Committee on April 25, 2007. Once adopted, the Plan will guide the public participation activities of the MPO in the future years.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the CUTS Participation Plan.

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the CUTS Participation Plan carried with none opposed.

C. Requested actions related to proposed widening of Gulfstream Rd. (Gruman Rd. and William Wilson Dr.) and Robert Miller Jr Rd.

- TCC Discussion and Action on Amendment to the 2030 LRTP to include widenings
- TCC Discussion and Action on Proposed Resolution for the Functional Reclassification of Gulfstream Rd. (Gruman Rd. and William Wilson Dr.) and Robert Miller Jr. Rd.

- TCC Discussion and Action on Amendment to the FY 2007-2009 TIP to include widenings.

Mark Wilkes told the group that GDOT has requested an amendment to the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The staff report in the mailing packet includes project details and information on the land uses, zoning, and bus service in the area. Mr. Wilkes said that GDOT is also requesting a resolution to change the functional classification of the two roads from Urban Local Streets to Urban Collector Streets. The Policy Committee will consider finalizing the LRTP amendment on Wednesday April 25, 2007. The amendment to the TIP will also be presented at this time. GDOT representatives had assured staff that additional funds would be provided for this project so that the amendment to the 2030 LRTP would not affect the financial balance of the plan. He added that the TCC recommendation to the Policy Committee is for the endorsement and approval of the 2030 LRTP amendment and endorsement and approval of the FY 2007 -2009 (current) TIP and the adoption of the resolution to reclassify Gulfstream Road (William Wilson Dr.) and Robert Miller Jr. Road.

It was moved and seconded for the approval of the Requested actions related to proposed widening of Gulfstream Road (William Wilson Dr.) and Robert Miller Jr. Rd.

TCC Action: the motion for the approval of the Requested actions related to proposed widening of Gulfstream Road (William Wilson Dr.) and Robert Miller Jr. Rd. carried with none opposed.

D. Endorsement of Amendment to the FY 2007-2009 TIP to shift phase for Diamond Causeway from FY 2007 to FY 2008

Ms. Wykoda Wang briefly stated that MPO received a request from GDOT in March 2007 for a new TIP amendment regarding the Diamond Causeway project. She stated that this would be a major amendment project and that Right of Way acquisition, \$140,000 of L230 funds be moved from FY 2007 to FY 2008. Staff requests the TCC endorse the amendment.

Mr. Radney Simpson added that the Office of Financial Management requested that the MPO pursue the TIP amendment. He said that the right-of-way acquisition would not occur in FY 2007, so a resulting benefit of the requested amendment would be that the department would have access to \$140,000. However the MPO will not lose the money.

Mr. Weitzman suggested that this fact be included when making the presentation before the Policy Committee.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the Amendment to the FY 2007 -2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to shift phase for Diamond Causeway from FY 2007 to FY 2008

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the Amendment to the FY 2007 -2009 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to shift phase for Diamond Causeway from FY 2007 to FY 2008carried with none opposed

III. Review and Discussion of FY 2008-2011 TIP Projects

Ms. Wykoda Wang informed the committee that, for the FY 2008-2011 TIP, staff proposes to continue the prioritization policies that were established in the development of the current TIP. She described the policies and presented the list of existing priority projects. She concluded the presentation by sharing a chart showing how some of the priority projects' phases have shifted since the previous TIP development due to either project schedule or funding.

Ms. Wang stated that according to the Participation Plan the MPO must hold a public hearing informing the public about the TIP Priority Project establishment. This public hearing will be held at the Policy Committee meeting on April 25, 2007 at 10:00am. Staff will recommend at that time the continuation of the MPO priority policies that were established last year.

IV. Status Reports

A. SR 204/Abercorn Ext. Improvements

Mr. Tommy Crochet distributed a handout on the SR/204 Abercorn Ext. Improvements. He mentioned a benefit/cost analysis has been done, along with a scheduled neighborhood meeting in Forrest Cove and Grove Hill Subdivision. Field surveys are still being done on US 17 and Rio Road. The consultants have updated construction ROW cost estimates and benefit/cost analysis on a few selected alternatives and have reviewed those estimates and the benefit/cost analysis with GDOT. GDOT has made the decision to move forward with a short list of alternatives for further refinement and further costing and input from the public. Attached to the handout were an executive summary from the public meeting in November 2006 with some of the comments received and the responses to those comments.

GDOT and the consultants have had discussion with Chatham Area Transit. Some of the things to try to work out with CAT would be bus pull outs in appropriate areas like the ramps at King George Boulevard; and potential ride share lots. His suggestion he said would be after the next PIOH to focus on an alternative from a traffic operations stand point. At that time some of the things that CAT would like to see would be added.

The next topic discussed was funding status. He reiterated the cost currently in the program was \$22-23 million for the first section of US 17 and Rio and \$30 million to identify ROW construction for Rio to Truman.

Mr. Mark Wilkes asked Mr. Crochet to return to the discussion regarding CAT and asked if sidewalks would be interpreted as part of the aspects that would help CAT's operations. He added that this is one of the missing links for transit services.

Mr. Crochet replied if there is a freeway frontage road scenario there would be sidewalks placed on the outside of frontage roads such as King George Boulevard and any other side streets that sidewalks should be placed. Curbs and gutters will also be placed along with the sidewalks.

Mr. Crochet continued on the funding topic. US 17 to Rio Road cost is up from \$22 thousand dollars to a total funding cost of at least \$100 million to \$170 million for construction of ROW. Rio to Truman is at minimal cost \$260 million up to \$500 million dollars.

Mr. Crochet moved to the topic of concept designs. He explained why some of the alternatives had been eliminated. For the section from US 17 to Rio Road, the alternative preferred thus far in the study was C1, a split diamond interchange of SR 204 at King George Blvd. and at Grove Point Rd. Based on average delay per vehicle miles traveled, the alternatives preferred by GDOT and the consultants for the section from Rio Road to Truman Phase 4 were:

- L2 – an elevated freeway in the middle with slip lanes to frontage roads in specific locations.
- M1 – viaduct all the way from Rio Road to the Truman connection, with no connections to frontage roads between those two points.

The model shows L2 to perform better because there would not be as much delay on the frontage roads, due to the fact that drivers can access the freeway on slip lanes to go from business to business over a medium distance. Mr. Thomson said he believes the model underestimates the demand for access to the local land uses and thus L2 would have more delay on the frontage roads than the consultants currently believe. He prefers a viaduct concept, 20 feet high, offset along the current alignment, allowing parking underneath. Mr. Crochet believes that would be the most costly. Mr. Thomson disagreed that the offset viaduct would require more right-of-way than some of the other designs.

Mr. Thomson asked if the cost estimate on M1 (viaduct) is still assuming it's in the center. Mr. Crochet replied the range covers that. After review he said there is the possibility of cutting maybe 20 to 25 million out of it, but it is still in the range of construction cost.

Discussion on benefit cost analysis for highways included such topics as the traffic volumes for the "Build Condition" versus the No Build Condition", crash benefit analysis, travel time benefit, operations benefit, and user construction cost.

Discussion on the bridge for Forrest Cove access included alternatives and acceptance of closer signal spacing on King George Boulevard and closer median opening spacing in lieu of the high cost of the bridge over Forrest Cove on 204.

Mr. Crochet added that he had received a letter from Mr. Tom Jones, (from Armstrong State University) supporting the freeway frontage road alternate. He announced that the PIOH is scheduled for Tuesday and Wednesday June 19, & 20, 2007 at the Armstrong Center.

B. SAFETEA-LU Interim Plan Update

Ms. Wang briefly stated that the SAFETEA-LU contains some new requirements for MPO including new provisions for the Long Range Transportation Plan. CUTS/MPO must accomplish an interim update of the 2030 LRTP by July 1, 2007 in order to comply with the new requirements. She highlighted the following interim plan update and progress items:

- 1) expansion of the list of agencies and organizations to be consulted in the planning process. This list has been used to mail letters to invite agencies to participate in the interim update process and will be used during future plan updates;
- 2) identification of potential conflict between projects in the plan and environmental assets. The consultant has complete two maps and a matrix depicting which transportation projects may impact historical and natural resources. Potential mitigation measures will be included in the LRTP;
- 3) a map showing the 15 high crash locations on Chatham County has been created to help identify safety problems in those location;
- 4) inclusion in the LRTP of operation and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities to relieve congestion and maximize safety. This task will be coordinated with the Congestion Management Process.

She announced that draft document will be ready for review by staff in April and public review in May 2007. This will be a 30 day public review period

C. Spur 404 /US 17 Back River Bridge Replacement

Mr. Mark Wilkes reported a concept meeting was held in the Author Mendonsa Room on March 22, 2007 regarding the future replacement of the bridge over Back River on Spur 404/US 17, connecting Hutchinson Island to South Carolina. GDOT considers this a high priority due to the low sufficiency rating of the bridge. Due to funding and schedule considerations, the currently preferred concept shows that a two lane bridge will be built. The bridge replacement cannot be delayed indefinitely because the existing bridge will be weight-restricted as early as 2010.

D. City of Tybee Island Mayor's letter regarding Lazeretto Creek Bridge and US 80 widening

Ms. Teresa Scott stated that she would email Ms. Love with answers regarding this item.

V. Agency Reports

Mr. Thomson asked if anyone had any questions or concerns regarding the agency reports.

A. CUTS Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Mr. Brian Leighton stated that Airtran is providing employment training for people with disabilities in the Gulfstream area. He voiced the concerns of ACAT regarding the availability of sidewalks and curb cuts in the Gulfstream road project. He also questioned if CAT would provide bus service in this area as a mode of transportation.

Ms. Teresa Scott answered though she was not 100% positive she believed sidewalks would be placed out in the Gulfstream area. She stated that she would do some research and have an answer by the next Policy Committee meeting. She stated that she would email her findings to Mark Wilkes by next week.

B. CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee

No report at this time.

C. Federal Highway Administration

No report at this time.

D. Federal Transit Administration

No report at this time.

E. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Scott said that the committee had already covered her projects in the course of discussion.

F. Chatham County

No report at this time.

G. City of Savannah

Mr. Steve Henry gave a brief status report on the Bay St / Jefferson St traffic improvement project; He reported that bid opening will be on April 24, 2007. He added that the contractor has been given 30 days to install the traffic signal and shortly after crosswalks will be put in.

H. Chatham Area Transit

No report at this time.

I. Georgia Ports Authority

No report at this time.

VI. Other Business

There was no other business before the committee.

VII. Other Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no other business, the Technical Coordinating Committee adjourned the April 19, 2007 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP
Director of Transportation Planning