



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

MPC Jerry Surrency Conference Room
110 East State Street

June 21, 2007

3:00 P.M.

Voting Members

Russ Abolt
Allan R. Black, P.E.
Robert H. Bonner Jr.
Daniel Bostek
Michael Brown
Al Bungard, P.E.
Robbie Byrd
Phillip Claxton
Scott Conner
Anne de la Sierra
Glenn Durrence
Patrick S. Graham
Brian Leighton

Doug J. Marchand
Kyle Mote
Carl Palmer
Russ Peterson
Tricia Reynolds
Diane Schleicher
Peter Shonka, P. E.
Bob Thomson
Thomas L. Thomson, P.E., AICP
Hugh "Trip" Tollison
Mike Weiner, P.E.
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP

Representing

Chatham County
Chatham County Engineering
LDH Corporation
Norfolk Southern Railroad Industry
City of Savannah
Chatham County Engineering
City of Pooler
City of Port Wentworth
CSX Transportation
Fort Steward/Hunter Army Airfield
GDOT – District 5
Savannah Airport Commission
CUTS Advisory Committee on
Accessible Transportation
Georgia Ports Authority
GDOT – Atlanta
Chatham Area Transit Authority
CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee
Coastal Georgia RDC
City of Tybee Island
City of Savannah Engineering
Thunderbolt
Executive Director MPC, Chair
Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
City of Savannah Engineering
MPO

Present

x

x

x

x

x

Voting Member Alternates

George Fidler
Stephen Henry
Teresa Scott

Representing

Savannah Airport Commission
City of Savannah Traffic Engineering
GDOT – District 5

x

x

x

Others Present

Jane Love
Brian Orr
Barbara Settzo
Wykoda Wang

Representing

MPO x
Landowner x
MPO x
MPO x

Call to Order

The June 21, 2007 meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee was called to order by Mr. Mark Wilkes. Due to the lack of a quorum, it was agreed to begin with the Agency Reports (Section V). The recap of the Agency Reports follows in Section V of this meeting summary. A quorum was obtained before the committee proceeded with the Action Items.

I. Approval of Agenda

The agenda was accepted with no changes requested.

II. Action Items

A. Approval of the April 19, 2007 CUTS TCC Meeting Minutes

Mr. Wilkes called for the approval of the April 19, 2007 minutes. There being no corrections, it was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2007 Technical Coordinating Committee as written.

TCC Action: the motion to approve the minutes of the April 19, 2007 Technical Coordinating Committee carried with none opposed.

B. Endorsement of the SAFETEA-LU Interim Plan Revision

Ms. Wykoda Wang reported on the necessity of this addendum to insure that the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) be in compliance with government regulations as stated in SAFETEA-LU. Ms. Wang gave a presentation highlighting the major changes and how the LRTP is being revised to meet these changes. Process requirements that have been revised in the LRTP by the MPO staff and consultants fall under the following topics: Safety, Security, Environmental Mitigation, System Operations, Congestion Management Process, Participation Plan, Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan, and Financial Plan.

Ms. Wang reported that during the 30-day public comment period no comments have been received. Mr. Wilkes commented that since the existing 2030 LRTP exceeded the minimum process requirements at the time of its adoption, this revision for SAFETEA-LU does not present any extreme changes to the LRTP.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the SAFETEA-LU Interim Plan Revision

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the SAFETEA-LU Interim Plan Revision as presented carried with none opposed.

C. Endorsement of the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Plan

Ms. Wang reported that the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) covers a four-year period. It is a list of obligated projects and a prioritization of the projects that reflects safety priorities. This TIP employs more visualization techniques, and it will be published electronically. The TIP has been modified to describe pedestrian and bicycle improvements whenever they are part of a project, and to include more detailed project descriptions for the Lump Sum projects. In the transit section, the document now lists the Section 5310 funding, used by the Department of Human Resources to purchase services for the elderly and disabled in Chatham County. She highlighted the highway project changes and the transit changes that are included in this TIP for FY 2008-2011. Two Transportation Enhancement projects are also listed individually in the TIP because they are receiving earmarked funds.

Mr. Stephen Henry pointed out an error on Page 70 of the draft TIP. For the Bay St. Widening in the Local Transportation Improvement Projects section, "I-16" should be corrected to read "I-516" in the project title.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Plan.

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Plan carried with none opposed.

III. Discussion Item: Needs for LRTP Update

Mr. Wilkes opened a discussion with GDOT representatives on the upcoming LRTP update. Under SAFETEA-LU, December 2007 is the deadline for updating the LRTP's financial plan. Mr. Wilkes asked about the update of project cost estimates that GDOT is doing. Mr. Kyle Mote replied that GDOT would be sending out a letter in a month or so outlining how GDOT will manage the estimates for "year-of-expenditure". Mr. Wilkes requested that cost estimates for projects that have a Project Identification number (PI #) be as accurate as possible. This is not as important for the long range projects. Mr. Mote believes that once GDOT determines its method on updating costs, more information will be available to the MPO. Neither Mr. Mote nor Ms. Teresa Scott could offer a time frame for when this would be available. It was agreed to wait for the letter and then formulate questions based on the letter.

Mr. Wilkes also requested input on updating the Travel Demand Model. He feels it is necessary to expand the model to a larger analysis area. Otherwise the model will include an unacceptably high number of external trips. He would like to start talking with Joel and his staff at GDOT about taking in a bigger area in the model update.

IV. Status Reports

A. Transportation Enhancements

Mr. Wilkes reported that there are five applicants in Chatham County seeking Transportation Enhancement funding through GDOT's selection process. The requested federal funds total approximately \$4,000,000.00. A written list of the projects was available to the committee. They include:

- AASU – phase 2 of a perimeter bicycle/pedestrian path connecting to transit routes and to Route 15 of the Chatham County Bikeway system.
- City of Savannah – Streetscape improvements along Montgomery St and side streets connecting with MLK Jr. Blvd, including new sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, landscaping, signage, and bike/ped amenities.
- City of Savannah – Streetscape improvements along Broughton St, including new sidewalks, crosswalks, lighting, landscaping, signage, informational kiosks, and bike/ped amenities.
- Chatham County – Chatham County sidewalk/bikeway project.
- City of Tybee Island – Traffic calming project designed for pedestrian safety, which retrofits two blocks of Butler Ave. (Hwy 80) from 14th St. to Tybrisa St. to an historic 1960's Tybee Island beach town streetscape. The project includes a landscaped median, diagonal on-street parking, and upgraded stormwater drainage.

Ms. Scott doubts that the selection committees will have released news of any approvals by the next meeting in August. The final selection by the State Board of Transportation is expected to occur in October.

B. Effingham Parkway

Mr. Wilkes reported that Buddy Carter coordinated a meeting that was held at the MPC to discuss proposed alternatives for the Effingham Parkway. The TCC members received a status report at today's meeting describing the alternatives. Ms. Wang reported that the traffic study from Effingham County's project consultants is expected shortly. Ms. Scott confirmed that this is an Effingham County project, and that GDOT is only reviewing the project, not sponsoring it. The Effingham portion and the Chatham portion are being treated as one project. Ms. Scott reported that the logical termini will be I-95. The proposed roadway is to come down to SR 30 and tie into the Jimmy DeLoach interchange. Ms. Scott confirmed that the widening of Benton Blvd is not part of this project. Ms. Wang reported that from now on Chatham County will be involved in the project. Ms. Scott said that it is necessary to tie in to an existing interchange at I-95; a new interchange is not an option. She added that the first issue is to get traffic from SR 30 to the Jimmy DeLoach Pkwy. The concept report is still unfinished, and she stressed that everything is very preliminary at this stage. There is a possibility that the project will be phased.

C. Certification of the CUTS/MPO Congestion Management Process (CMP)

Mr. Wilkes and Ms. Wang reported that the 2004 Congestion Management System (CMS) was reviewed. It meets all the requirements of the SAFETEA-LU legislation for a Congestion Management Process (CMP). Ms. Wang highlighted particular locations in her presentation. The staff will recommend to the Policy Committee that they pass a resolution to certify the Congestion Management Process

V. Agency Reports

A. CUTS Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Mr. Brian Leighton reported that ACAT approved everything presented to the committee with one stipulation on the TIP endorsement. The committee wants to be sure there will be curb cuts in the sidewalks in the Gulfstream road widening project mentioned in the TIP. Ms. Scott reported that she has discussed with the designer the need for sidewalks from the bus stop to Gulfstream. They were definitely looking into it. Mr. Leighton mentioned that Airtran is located in the same vicinity, and they are now hiring people with disabilities. Ms. Scott commented that they were seriously considering sidewalks in the areas where people walk but not the entire length of the project. She will have a definite answer by the next meeting.

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 referred committee members to the written report and reviewed the listed projects:

- Project 2 (Tibet) is delayed due to issues with GA Power.
- Projects 3, 4, and 5 which are all intersections with SR 204 are in the September letting as of now.
- The Ogeechee Road environmental document is in review.
- Project 21, Diamond Causeway: revising the concept to build a 2-lane bridge to the north of the existing bridge in order to get traffic off the island in an emergency and not use the old bridge. GDOT believes they can get this built before they can get the main project built.

- Project 23, SR 204: GDOT had 2 public meetings this week on the SR204 project. In addition to the Public Information Open House, Tommy Crochet, one of the consultants, also met with the local neighborhood in May. The comments appear to be favorable overall.
- Project 29, Ocean Highway: scheduled for letting at the end of the year. This will include an off-site detour which may be in place up to 1.5 years.
- US 17 project is nearly complete. Striping and finishing touches are all that remains.
- Middleground project is also moving forward. Anticipated completion is for Fall 2008.

F. Chatham County

Mr. Al Black referred members to the written report. Truman Pkwy Phase V acquisition of right-of-way should be completed in 2008. Construction funding may be pushed out to 2010. No additional public meetings are expected for this project. Jimmy DeLoach Pkwy Phase II is undergoing concept revision. For the Whitfield Ave widening, the County is now dealing with landscaping issues. The median will be as wide as 50 feet in some locations. Mr. Russ Peterson asked for clarification of the two-bridge concept along Diamond Causeway. Mr. Black and Ms. Scott commented that there would most likely be a public hearing on the 2-bridge concept now under consideration by GDOT. This was a GDOT recommendation to speed up the resolution to the Diamond Causeway bridge problem.

G. City of Savannah

Mr. Henry distributed a written status report which included the following:

- Gwinnett St. Curve Reconstruction - Real Properties Dept. is working on the right-of-way acquisition necessary for the project.
- Gwinnett St. Widening – The Environmental Study is being reviewed by the State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO). The Categorical Exclusion (CE) document is anticipated to be submitted by the end of October 2007.
- LaRoche Ave. Widening – Concept design was revised.
- Anderson Curve Reconstruction – The project is under design.
- DeRenne Ave./Emergency Vehicle Traffic Signal Pre-emption System – The City is coordinating with Chatham County for the implementation process. Meeting was held on May 22 with hospitals and emergency providers to discuss implementation and lease agreement for equipment for ambulances.
- Bay St/Jefferson St. – Crosswalk and sidewalk work has been completed. Traffic signal was put in flashing operation on June 20. Signal is scheduled to be put in stop/go operation on June 22. Mr. Henry reported that 4 of the 8 audible signals planned for Bay St. are in operation. Some have temporarily been pulled out due to construction. All of the audible signals are expected to be in place by the end of the year.
- Chatham Pkwy/Chatham Center Dr. – Signal construction plans are under design.

H. Chatham Area Transit Authority

No report at this time.

I. Georgia Ports Authority

No report at this time.

J. Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport

No report at this time.

VI. Other Business

Ms. Wang asked Mr. Mote about a letter sent to GDOT about the MPO's request to move up some projects in the TIP. Mr. Mote replied that nothing has crossed his desk. Both MPO and GDOT will follow up on the location and response to this letter.

There was a brief discussion of the proposed location of the Traffic Control Center (TCC). Mr. Henry is pressing for a decision on location because the City is in the process of designing a new City Lot and the office locations of some City transportation staff will depend on the location of the Traffic Control Center.

VII. Other Public Comments

No other public comments at this time.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no other business, the Technical Coordinating Committee adjourned the June 21, 2007 meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

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