



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

**TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

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

April 17, 2008

3:00 P.M.

Voting Members

Representing

Present

Russ Abolt	Chatham County	
Brannyn Allen	City of Tybee Island	
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	
Leon Davenport	Chatham County Engineering	x
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	
Doug J. Marchand	Georgia Ports Authority	
Kyle Mote	GDOT – Atlanta	x
Russ Peterson	CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee	
Tricia Reynolds	Coastal Georgia RDC	
Joe Murray Rivers	Chatham Area Transit Authority	
Peter Shonka, P. E.	City of Savannah Engineering	
Bob Thomson	Town of 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 Traffic Engineering	x
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP	MPO	x

Voting Member Alternates

Representing

Sean Brandon (arrived later)	City of Savannah	x
George Fidler	Savannah Airport Commission	x
Teresa Scott	GDOT – Jesup	x

Others Present

Steve Cote
Latoya Jones
Jane Love
Barbara Settzo
Wykoda Wang

Representing

RS&H X
FHWA X
MPO X
for MPO X
MPO X

Call to Order

Chairman Tom Thomson called the April 17, 2008 meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee to order.

I. Approval of Agenda

There being no changes, the agenda was approved.

II. Action Items

A. Approval of the February 21, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee.

TCC Action: the motion to approve the minutes of the February 21, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee carried with none opposed.

B. Endorsement of CUTS/MPO “Year-of-Expenditure” Update for Financial Plan of the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Mr. Kyle Mote confirmed that a letter is being sent recommending that the preliminary engineering phases of the two interstate interchanges be put back into the plan. The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) also requests in this letter that the large spreadsheet include a key or legend to identify the different colors and that the colors be used consistently throughout.

Mr. Thomson explained that the MPO staff met with county and city staff to discuss what projects could not be funded. They used established long range priorities and the history of project expenditures to select these projects.

Mr. Steve Cote made the final presentation for the Year-of-Expenditure Update. Using the 2004 adopted plan as a framework, they divided the projects among the three cost bands of 2008-2013, 2014-2020, 2021-2030 and used the GDOT recommended inflation rate of 2.5% per year to reflect anticipated costs and revenues. It was found there was a substantial

shortfall of approximately \$660,000,000. They have included three toll projects on the revenue side: SR 204/Abercorn St. (Rio Rd. to Truman Pkwy. Phase 5), Northwest Parkway (SR 21 near I95 to I-16 @ I-516), and Effingham Parkway (Effingham County line to SR 30). To reconcile the shortfall, several projects were moved from the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) to an unfunded Vision Plan. The three criteria used to determine projects for the Vision Plan were: priority level in the 2030 LRTP, project need, and the extent of funding already spent on the project. He reviewed the following projects that were put in the Vision Plan:

- L RTP Priority I projects: I-16/I-95 new interchange
I-516/I-16 new interchange
- L RTP Priority II projects: I-16 widening from I-95 to I-516
I-516 widening from Veterans Pkwy to Mildred St.
DeRenne Ave operational from Mildred St to Abercorn St
SR 26/US 80 operational at Johnny Mercer Blvd
Mildred St/Hampstead Ave widening from I-516 to Abercorn St
Abercorn interchange reconstruct at I-95
- L RTP Priority III projects: SR 21 widening from Northwest Pkwy to SR 30
SR 307/Dean Forest Rd new interchange at Veterans Pkwy
LaRoche Ave operational from Skidaway Rd to So. City Limits
DeLesseps Ave operational from Waters Ave to Skidaway Rd
SR 307/Dean Forest Rd new roadway from US 17 to Garard St
Quacco Rd widening from Pooler Pkwy to I-95
Quacco Rd/Little Neck Rd new interchange at I-95

It was noted that the preliminary engineering for the first two projects was put back in the 2030 LRTP. All of these projects will be re-visited in the 2035 LRTP.

Mr. Thomson asked for the total program costs in dollars. Mr. Cote referred the committee to Table 6 showing that Roadway Improvements show projected revenues and projected costs of \$1,772,363,440. Roadway Operations and Maintenance show projected revenues and costs of \$358,265,248.

Mr. Thomson recommended that Mr. Cote include in his Policy Committee presentation a slide showing the percentage of dollars moved to the Vision Plan in order to make the Year-of-Expenditure Update financially constrained. It is approximately 25%.

Ms. Wykoda Wang noted that the 15-day comment period is still open at this time.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the CUTS/MPO Year-of-Expenditure Update for the Financial Plan of the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the CUTS/MPO Year of Expenditure Update for the Financial Plan of the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) carried with none opposed.

C. Requested Amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- a. **Shift Right-of-way phase for Grange Rd. widening project from FY 2008 to FY 2009**
- b. **Shift Right-of-way phase for SR 204/Abercorn Extension improvement project (King George Blvd. to Rio Rd.) from FY 2008 to FY 2009**
- c. **Shift the Skidaway Narrows Bridge Replacement project from FY 2008 to FY 2009**

Mr. Mote confirmed that the Grange Road widening project is being designed by GDOT as a 3-lane roadway. Mr. George Fidler recommended locking up the right-of-way for five lanes. Teresa confirmed that this project hasn't moved along very far yet. There is no initial concept yet and they don't have any traffic counts yet.

These three shifts are being requested for scheduling reasons.

Ms. Teresa Scott reported that they are awaiting decisions on the SR 204/Abercorn project. There has been a suggestion to split the environmental review into two tiers for the two project segments, but no decision has been made to do that. Mr. Thomson said that the local interests are anxious to get the west end fixed. They think the design concept for the west end is fine.

Mr. Thomson asked GDOT to be prepared for the Skidaway Narrows project to be an issue at the Policy Committee meeting. Mr. Thomson advised Chairman Liakakis of the proposed legislation that caused the delay, and that this shift from FY 2008 to FY 2009 will only delay the project until October 2008, i.e. a few months. Mr. Mote explained that GDOT cannot speculate about a construction date. GDOT can only speculate that the project will be let in October 2008, but construction will not start then.

Mr. Thomson recommended, if possible, that GDOT prepare a letter signed by Commissioner Gena Abraham for the Policy Committee meeting that explains the situation for this project. Mr. Leon Davenport recommended clarifying the nature of the original project schedule, i.e. about the June start date. It should be clarified that "dirt was never going to be turned" in June 2008.

It was moved and seconded to endorse shifting the two right-of-way amendments (Grange Rd. & SR 204) and shifting the Skidaway Narrows Bridge Replacement project from FY 2008 to FY 2009.

TCC Action: the motion to endorse shifting the two right-of-way amendments (Grange Rd. & SR 204) and shifting the Skidaway Narrows Bridge Replacement project from FY2008 to FY2009 carried with none opposed.

- III. **Discussion Item:** Criteria for minor and major amendments to the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and the MPO Transportation Improvement Program TIP)

Mr. Mote said that the letter had been mailed out on Tuesday addressing the various comments submitted to GDOT.

Mr. Thomson explained that MPO staff were concerned about the possibility that small changes to the MPO discretionary funds (L230) that formerly were minor amendments now would become administrative modifications, requiring no approval from the MPO. The MPO should know about any change to L230 money.

Ms. Lotoya Jones explained that there will be only two categories – an administrative modification or an amendment. The distinction between minor and major amendments is going away. These changes in the STIP amendment process are being made to identify the thresholds for categorizing a change as either an administrative modification or as an amendment. If the MPO uses the current STIP amendment process, they should change over to this new process to conform to GDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Mr. Mote said that anything under \$2,000,000 will be considered an administrative modification. The MPO will be notified of administrative modifications by a monthly report.

Mr. Mark Wilkes and Mr. Thomson want to be sure that the MPO will be notified directly of all changes.

Mr. Mote said that GDOT requests that the MPO adopt this amendment process into their Participation Plan.

IV. Status Reports

A. Schedule for adoption of the FY2009 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Thomson reported that the MPO staff is working on a draft for presentation at next week's Policy Committee meeting, as GDOT has requested an earlier submission this year. Ms. Jones reminded him that FHWA must formally comment on the program, and they must formally approve it after the Policy Committee endorses it. Mr. Thomson noted that they are fast-tracking this but will "stop at all the right places."

Mr. Mote noted that the contract will follow as soon as the approved UPWP is submitted.

B. Initiation of development of 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan

Mr. Wilkes reported that they are ready to begin the update process as soon as they receive the signed funding contracts. The scope has been divided into four (4) sections – two funding contracts in this fiscal year and two funding contracts for the next fiscal year. Anticipated adoption is September 2009. Public involvement will be on-going throughout the all sections.

Mr. Mote reported that the state Attorney General is reviewing all GDOT contracts. The current contracts in question are being reviewed now.

Mr. Thomson reported that they are trying to develop a “kick-off” process for the 2035 LRTP to raise interest and encourage public involvement. Because there is no long range transit plan right now, they will be calling for a discussion with CAT, the MPO, City Mobility and other transit players. The TCC may be called upon to meet more often as this entire 2035 LRTP develops. The Bikeway Plan is good but needs updating. There is no pedestrian plan but they want to create one for the 2035 LRTP.

Mr. Fidler recommended that elected officials be involved in the development of the 2035 LRTP.

V. Agency Reports

A. CUTS Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Ms. Love reported on behalf of the Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation. Since they did not have a quorum they did not vote on any action items this month. At the February meeting, the Year-of-Expenditure update was on the agenda and they did endorse it subject to resolution of GDOT and FHWA issues. They also endorsed two of the three TIP amendments at their February meeting, but did not have the opportunity to endorse the more recently requested amendment -- Skidaway Narrows Bridge Replacement -- at the April meeting due to lack of a quorum.

B. CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee

No report at this time.

C. Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Latoya Jones reported she had nothing more to report other than the changes in the amendment process that were already discussed.

D. Federal Transit Administration

No report at this time.

E. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Teresa Scott asked for any questions about the report she distributed. She highlighted the following projects:

- #10 SR 204/Abercorn Ext @ Harmon Canal – preliminary field plan review in February; Ms. Scott will send a copy of meeting minutes to Mr. Weiner regarding a meeting on this project.
- #11 SR 307 construct overpass – preliminary field plan review in January
- #13 SR 204 Spur/Diamond Causeway – concept is being circulated for signature. She will send MPO a copy.

- #18 CR 787/Islands Expressway – concept is being routed for signature. Mr. Davenport was under the impression that only the draft concept was ready, not the final. Ms. Scott believes it is the final concept report that is up for signature. She will investigate and send a copy to the MPO, Mr. Davenport and Mr. Mote.
- #22 SR 307/Dean Forest Rd – final field plan review in February. Nearly all parcels are bought and they are close to certifying. Hope to let in July.
- #30 Jimmy Deloach Pkwy – approved concept on this project
- #33 I-16 @ I-95 lighting – waiting on Pooler to sign the contracts.
- #34 I-95 @ SR 204/Abercorn St – preliminary field plan in March
- #46 Jimmy Deloach Pkwy Ext – new road project; they have had an initial concept meeting. Ms. Scott pointed out that at this point all the funds are local so it won't show up in the TIP.

F. Chatham County

Mr. Leon Davenport referred to the report distributed to the group. He highlighted the following:

- Truman Parkway – expected to certify right of way in August
- Whitfield – will be having the PFPR on May 14th.

G. City of Savannah

Mr. Mike Weiner distributed a written status report and highlighted the following existing projects:

Gwinnett Street Widening – The air and noise studies have been completed and submitted to GDOT for review. They have decided to raise the grade of the bridge to create clearance for navigation. Ms. Scott recommended they move forward on a POH for this project. The city is responsible for holding the hearing. GDOT will assist.

Chatham Parkway/Chatham Center Drive – project delayed due to late arrival of the poles. It is anticipated that the signal will be operational on May 15th.

The city has two new projects:

Windsor Road/Largo Drive – Engineering proposals were received from seven consulting firms for the improvements for this intersection. The department is evaluating proposals.

Chatham Parkway/Southern Blvd. – The department received seven engineering proposals for the design of a new traffic signal at this intersection.

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

Mr. George Fidler reported the following projects:

- Resurfacing of Airways Avenue will begin in June
- Awarded a contract to extend taxiway B to the south to allow larger general aviation aircraft to access service facilities
- Awarded contract for additional taxiway for general aviation light aircraft
- Award contract to design 500 foot extension to the crosswind runway

IV. Other Business

Mr. Mote told the committee that Cora Cook and Phil Peevy (air quality specialists in the GDOT office) have asked that the Coastal Commuters program be coordinated through the Clean Air Campaign before it goes any further. Mr. Mote is not sure what they want, but he explained that the state has a contract with the Clean Air Campaign, a private organization, to do projects like the MPO's Coastal Commuters program. Mr. Thomson needs immediate clarification of this request because the Coastal Commuters kicks off tomorrow with a press conference. Mr. Thomson noted that no GDOT funds are being used for this program. This is meant to be a pilot program and it is intended to be passed along to either CAT or the region. The MPO is doing this as part of their commitment to improving DeRenne Avenue.

V. Other Public Comments

No other public comments at this time.

VII. Adjournment

There being no other business, the April 17, 2008 meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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