



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

**TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

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

June 19, 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	
Doug J. Marchand	Georgia Ports Authority	
Kyle Mote	GDOT – Atlanta	x
Representative	CUTS Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation	
Representative	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

George Fidler	Savannah Airport Commission	x
Teresa Scott	GDOT – Jesup	x
Beth Thulin	Chatham Area Transit	x
Randy Weitman	Georgia Ports Authority	x

Others Present

Jane Love
Barbara Settzo
Wykoda Wang
Stephen Warner
Emily Wingate

Representing

MPO X
for MPO X
MPO X
Norfolk Southern Corp. X
GDOT-District 5 Intern X

Call to Order

Chairman Tom Thomson called the June 19, 2008 meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee to order.

I. Approval of Agenda

The revised agenda was approved, as presented.

II. Action Items

A. Approval of the April 17, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the April 17, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee. Changes to the minutes were requested by Mr. Kyle Mote and Mr. George Fidler. The changes are as follows:

Under agenda Item II-B, the first sentence should read “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.”

Under agenda Item V-J, the second bullet point should read “Awarded a contract to extend taxiway *B . . .*” and the third bullet point should read “Awarded contract for *additional* taxiway for . . .”

TCC Action: the motion to approve the amended minutes of the April 17, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee carried with none opposed.

B. Requested amendment to the 2030 Long Range Transportation Program to include the Georgia Ports Authority/Norfolk Southern Project.

Mr. Randy Weitman began the presentation. The basis of this project goes back to 2005 SAFETEA-LU Act. Under this act the Georgia Ports Authority received a \$5,000,000 grant in annual payments of \$1,000,000 for five years. He outlined the specifics for qualifying for this grant. He then identified the geographical area involved in the proposed project.

Mr. Stephen Warner explained the “wye” concept. Currently the rail line forms half of the wye. They are requesting construction of the western side of the wye. Mr. Warner described the current rail route which includes numerous road crossings. With the proposed

we they can shorten the rail route significantly and avoid those road crossings. The current rail loop will still be used but this new wye will reduce the amount of rail traffic on the current loop. He listed all the street crossings that would benefit from the proposed route change. These crossings are located in Garden City, Port Wentworth, Savannah and in unincorporated portions of Chatham County. Intermodal rail traffic through the areas east of the wye should be reduced by 25-30%. Some shorter trains will still use the current rail route to access industries in that segment, but the intermodal trains being re-routed are the long trains. Traffic congestion will be reduced and safety will be increased by removing these long intermodal trains from the current route across street crossings. Mr. Warner anticipates significant fuel, noise and pollution savings in addition to the increased safety and decreased delays for local street traffic.

Mr. Weitman noted that this new route will improve operations at the port which is why they are financially supporting it.

Mr. Warner estimates reducing road blockage time by seven hours a day.

The cost of the construction is \$7,000,000. The earmarked portion is \$1,500,000 which is coming from the port's \$5,000,000 grant. This does not affect the funding of any other project. They are working with GDOT on all the various permits and studies.

Mr. Wilkes asked if the Port had other plans for the balance of the \$5,000,000. Mr. Weitman said the Port hopes to use it for a southern connection of the Intermodal Container Transfer Facility (ICTF) back into Norfolk Southern to make it a double-ended yard.

It was moved and seconded to endorse further study of the amendment to the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan to include the Georgia Ports Authority/Norfolk Southern Project.

TCC Action: the motion to endorse further study of the amendment to the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan to include the Georgia Ports Authority/Norfolk Southern Project carried with none opposed.

- C. Requested Amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**
 - 1. Action on TIP Amendment for Transit Section**
 - 2. Action on TIP Amendment for Hutchinson Island Projects**
 - 3. Action on TIP Amendment for additional planning (L230) funds (PI 0008964)**

Ms. Beth Thulin, the new finance director for Chatham Area Transit reported on the status of grant monies that are about to lapse and earmarked funds that need to be rolled forward. To access these funds they need to be placed in the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program. These funds are earmarked, and therefore the projects and programs using these funds do not take any money from other existing projects.

Ms. Wykoda Wang reported that the second amendment is to add the earmarked funds for two Hutchinson Island projects into the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program

so the funds can be accessed for use on these projects. The projects are Slip 3/Parcel 7 Riverwalk Extension project and the Water Ferry Riverwalk Intermodal Facility project.

Ms. Wang also reported that the third amendment to the FY2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program is for L230 funds to be used by the MPO for a Strategic Planning Study.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the requested amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the requested amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) carried with none opposed.

D. Amendment to the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program for additional planning (L230) funds and revised Commuter Program activities

Mr. Mark Wilkes requested the amendment to incorporate the L230 funds into the UPWP which were just approved for the TIP. The second amendment would revise the description of activities using the FTA Section 5303 (transit planning) funds to allow registration of the commuter program trademark. Ms. Love reported that it was advised to put a clear description in the UPWP so that staff would be allowed to use the funds for this purpose. She had solicited feedback this month from the FTA planners on this part of the amendment, but so far has not received any comments.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the amendment to the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program for additional planning (L230) funds and revised commuter program activities.

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the amendment to the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program for additional planning (L230) funds and revised commuter program activities carried with none opposed.

E. Endorsement of the CUTS/MPO Project Prioritization for input into GDOT's Project Prioritization report to the Commissioner

Mr. Thomson reviewed the memo and chart distributed to committee members. This list focuses on the set of projects that are the local priorities. He assumes GDOT will direct funding to projects that are ready to go. Therefore, this is a list of priority projects that appear to be on track for construction by 2012.

Table 1 is a list of projects that are already let. Table 2 shows projects that will be ready for construction by fiscal year 2012 divided into four priority groups, as defined in the TIP (top priority, 1st priority, 2nd priority, non-priority). Table 3 shows TIP priority projects that will NOT be ready for construction by fiscal year 2012. Table 3 also indicates three projects that will not actually be ready for construction by 2012 but which have construction funds programmed by 2012. Staff recommends that those funds be released to be used for construction-ready projects mentioned in Table 2. Table 4 lists non-priority projects that will be ready by fiscal year 2012.

Mr. Thomson pointed out that the Ogeechee Rd widening project is on track for construction in FY 2012. The SR 307 widening project will not be ready by FY 2012, therefore staff would like the funding currently allocated to the SR 307 project to be reallocated to the Ogeechee Rd project.

Mr. Thomson asked GDOT staff if it was true that GDOT may break out the King George Boulevard interchange from the larger corridor project environmental study. This would move that portion of the project forward. If this is true, Mr. Thomson would like this project noted as a 1st Priority project.

Mr. Kyle Mote replied that Mr. Ross is planning to have a meeting with the MPO about this issue.

Mr. Thomson asked Mr. Weitman about the Jimmy DeLoach parkway project. Currently this project is not in the Long Range Transportation Plan nor is it in the Transportation Improvement Program. Mr. Weitman said that the Port has been working with GDOT to satisfy the review process of the Georgia Environmental Protection Act (GEPA) rather than the National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA), as they had not planned to use federal funds. He hasn't received any recent clarification about how the project is being funded. Originally it was to be a Public/Private Initiative project, but the schedule that the Port and GDOT had set has not been met. Mr. Thomson is concerned that this project is "out there" with a high profile among the MPO board members, but it is not part of the established process. Mr. Weitman said the port has hired a consultant on GDOT's behalf and GDOT has staffed the project out of Atlanta. A scope for the project is being developed.

Ms. Teresa Scott noted that if it is funded by GDOT then it needs to go into the Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. George Fidler agreed that it needs to be part of the MPO plans. Ms. Love questioned whether it needed to be in the plan if it doesn't use federal funds. Mr. Mote agreed that if federal money is not used, it does not need to be in the plan.

Mr. Weitman said at this point they are about 50% complete in their work. It is time for decisions from GDOT.

Mr. Thomson commented that since this project is outside the port it should be noted that this project is not consistent with the Comprehensive Plan of the MPC.

Ms. Scott noted that the Jimmy DeLoach Parkway Extension project does appear on her project list with PI #0008690 and construction funding listed as "other".

Discussion of Table 2 followed. Mr. Weitman suggested another column called "Let Date" be added. Ms. Scott disagreed since the let date is only a target date and subject to change at any moment. Mr. Thomson noted that these tables are a listing of TIP projects sorted by construction-ready status. Mr. Leon Davenport suggested changing the word "complete" in the Production Status column of Table 2 and Table 3 to either "submitted" or "approved". It was agreed to make that correction.

On Table 2 the Production Status column now should read:

For project 533200	Env approved
For project 533205	Env approved
For project 550560	ROW Plns submitted
For project 0002921	ROW Plns approved
For project 0000345	ROW Plns approved
For project 0004046	ROW Plns approved

On Table 3, for project 0002923 Production Status should now read “Env approved.” Also it’s possible that this project may be ready for construction by 2012. Ms. Scott asked about the President Street project in Table 3. It was agreed to keep it in the table but to add a footnote explaining the funding.

Projects in Table 4 and 5 will probably be refreshed when the next Transportation Improvement Program is developed.

The message Mr. Thomson would like to communicate is that the projects listed in Table 1 are really going to happen and should be built; Table 2 projects need to stay on track and funding held for them; Table 3 projects need to get done faster and funding found for them.

Mr. Thomson asked the committee members to review the tables and submit any corrections or comments by Tuesday so that he can submit this to the Policy Committee on Wednesday.

No action was taken. This item was treated as a status report.

III. Status Reports

A. Bicycle Policies and Design Guidance

Mr. Thomson referred the committee members to the memo in the packet of information.

B. Proposed Lazaretto Creek Bridge Bikeway cross-section and examples of alternatives

Ms. Love presented pictures of the current cross-section plan for the proposed improvement of the Lazaretto Creek Bridge. She referred the committee members to the report in the information packet which contained photos of three types of bicycle bridge crossings. One option that would satisfy GDOT’s horizontal clearance policy and still provide barrier separation of bicyclists and motorists would be a cross-section consisting of a 10-foot shoulder, a barrier, and a minimum 5-foot bikeway beyond the barrier. This option would add more than 10 feet to the existing proposal for the bridge replacement, assuming both sides of the bridge would be treated identically. Another option was a stand-alone bicycle/pedestrian bridge. Ms. Love noted that GDOT staff has said that they cannot provide this alternative as part of the widening project because the bikeway on a separate bridge would no longer be part of the roadway. The state constitution requires the motor fuel tax revenue to be used for “public roads and bridges”. GDOT interprets this to exclude

stand-alone bikeways. Ms. Scott mentioned that Tybee Island can apply for Transportation Enhancement funding.

C. Gwinnett Street Widening Project

No further report at this time. A staff report was included in the mailing.

D. Chatham County interstate Needs Analysis

Mr. Kyle Mote made the presentation of GDOT's study of the needs along the Interstates. The presentation included an overview of the process and the specifics on the top twelve projects. The top twelve projects were divided into two groups - widening projects and interchange improvement projects. Projects were prioritized in each group. Total estimated costs for widening projects is \$307,250,000 and the total estimated cost for interchange projects is \$332,000,000 for a total improvement cost of \$639,250,000.

Questions were raised on the following projects:

Widening of I-516 from Veterans Pkwy to Mildred St.

I-95 at SR 204 interchange improvements

I-16 at Chatham Pkwy interchange improvements

Mr. Thomson asked about the status of the ramp removal at Montgomery St. & MLK Jr., Blvd and was told that it was under separate contract. It is currently being scoped. Mr. Thomson would like to be involved in that process.

IV. Agency Reports

A. CUTS Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

No report at this time.

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. Federal Transit Administration

Ms. Teresa Scott asked for any questions about the report she distributed. She noted that the let date for the Diamond Causeway project is no longer November. It has been moved to January 2009.

F. Chatham County

Mr. Leon Davenport referred to his report that he distributed to the group. He noted that the right-of-way plans for Whitfield Avenue are not likely for this fiscal year.

G. City of Savannah

Mr. Mike Weiner distributed a written status report.

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 that the resurfacing of Airways Avenue will now begin in August 2008.

V. Agency Reports

There was no other business at this time.

VI. Other Public Comments

No other public comments at this time.

VII. Adjournment

There being no other business, the June 19, 2008 meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee adjourned. The next meeting will be August 21, 2008.

Respectfully submitted,

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