



**TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

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

February 19, 2009

3:00 P.M.

Voting Members

Representing

Present

Russ Abolt	Chatham County	
Robert H. Bonner Jr.	LDH Corporation	
Daniel Bostek	Norfolk Southern Railroad Industry	
Teresa Brenner	CUTS Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation	x
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	
Nathan Mai-Lombardo	City of Garden City	x
Doug Marchand	Georgia Ports Authority	
Kyle Mote	GDOT	x
Dianne Otto	City of Tybee Island	x
Representative	CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee	
Tricia Reynolds	Coastal Georgia RDC	x
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	City of Savannah	x
Jean Iaderosa	CAT	x
Teresa Scott	GDOT – District 5	x

Others Present

Michael Adams
LaToya Jones
Jane Love
Brad Saxon
Bob Scanlon
Barbara Settzo
Radney Simpson
Wykoda Wang

Representing

MPO X
FHWA X
MPO X
GDOT-- District 5 X
City of Savannah X
for MPO X
GDOT X
MPO X

Call to Order

Chairman Tom Thomson called the February 19, 2009 meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee to order.

I. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Thomson recommended, and it was agreed, to hold Action Item B, Amendments to the TIP, until after completion of Status Reports. There being no other agenda changes, the Agenda was approved, as modified. (For purposes of this summary, the comments on the discussion of Action Item B occur in the original Agenda order.)

II. Action Items

A. Approval of the October 16, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee.

TCC Action: the motion to approve the minutes of the October 16, 2008 Technical Coordinating Committee carried with none opposed.

B. Endorsement of the amendments to FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Thomson asked for confirmation from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) that the key to ensuring eligibility for projects is that the project be in the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and ready to commit. Environmental processes will not be suspended. The money will come to the state and be distributed by traditional funding formulas. There will be discretionary transit money but not much discretionary highway money. A rule of thumb for the size of the stimulus portion would be double the amount of the regular funding in an average TIP year. As presented today, the list of transportation stimulus requests from the various agencies totals more than \$226 million. A typical year's funding level is approximately \$43 million.

Mr. Kyle Mote confirmed Mr. Thomson's assumptions. The Truman Pkwy., a \$100 million project, is an expensive project that raises the dollar amount requested for this MPO. Projects should be "reasonably" anticipated to be ready to commit.

Ms. Latoya Jones confirmed that total, federal, highway transportation funding is \$27.5 billion; eligibility will follow surface transportation program rules; 33% will be sub-allocated (3% for transportation enhancement; 30% allocated according to population); 50% of funds that the state does not sub-allocate must be obligated within 120 days; whatever is not obligated of that 50% will be withdrawn. She defined "obligated" as being entered in the federal accounting system. Mr. Thomson defined "apportionment" as occurring when the funding appears in the federal register. That is the date from which the 120 day time-frame begins. This is expected to occur in early March.

Mr. Thomson had heard from FTA that transit agencies need to do a separate grant for their portions of stimulus funding.

Mr. Mote had been told that it is possible that stimulus monies may go directly to local governments, but not likely. Mr. Thomson concluded from this comment that local governments need to interact with GDOT officials to get their projects funded and going through the state's letting process. They need to deliver the complete project package (environmental, contracts, and all requirements necessary for letting) within 120 days.

Ms. Jones noted that the other 50% is good up to a year. One year after apportionment any unobligated funds are redistributed to other areas that have met the deadlines.

Mr. Mike Weiner, Mr. Mote and Mr. Thomson discussed the pros and cons of splitting a project into two parts – with preliminary engineering (PE) obligated within the 120 days and construction within the year. Mr. Mote noted that competition for the funding will be less in the near-term, 120 day window, since some projects don't qualify on readiness. No conclusion reached.

Mr. Mote confirmed that the stimulus-related TIP amendments submitted by GDOT are those projects that GDOT believes are "reasonable" for 2009 and 2010. As the GDOT list reads now, it represents 16% of the stimulus money Georgia will receive, but Chatham County represents 3% of the state population.

Mr. Thomson asked local governments to sit down with GDOT and re-evaluate projects and then submit realistic and highest priority projects for the TIP. MPO will put in a generous list of eligible projects into the TIP so we don't miss an opportunity. The state projects are listed in either regular or stimulus category. Transit needs to be carefully reviewed and possibly include streetcars.

Ms. Teresa Scott noted that Transportation Enhancement (TE) projects for stimulus need to meet all the same requirements as for regular TE funding. At this time she believes no TE projects are ready for stimulus money. The two projects that are ready are already funded. The next two closest to being ready are sidewalks in Pooler and curb cuts/bike trails on Tybee. City staff said that the MLK Blvd. Streetscape project is ready, but Ms. Scott said she had not seen it on the list of those ready.

Mr. Thomson requested a special meeting on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 5:00 PM for the purpose of reviewing the proposed TIP Amendment based on a revised amendment list developed between now and then. A vote on endorsing the TIP Amendment will be taken at the special meeting.

Mr. Thomson opened the meeting for questions from the floor about any project. Projects discussed included President's St. widening concluding with the decision that it is up to the City of Savannah to provide GDOT with an update on what is needed to move the project along. Mr. Mote recommended to the city that they send a letter to GDOT outlining all aspects of the President Street project, including the current status, what still needs to be done, and how the project will create jobs not only in roadway construction but also by facilitating the construction and occupation of the private developments planned for the corridor, as Mr. Bob Scanlon had mentioned today. Mr. Thomson asked county and city to copy the MPO on any such correspondence so that the MPO can assist in the process.

Mr. Scanlon added that, for the Ogeechee Rd./Victory Dr. project, a public hearing is scheduled for March to wrap up the environmental process. If right-of-way is acquired on a timely schedule, the project could be ready for construction in FY 2010.

On the Bay Street widening project, Mr. Leon Davenport said he would check with the County's consultant about whether it is ready for right-of-way acquisition.

Regarding the Georgia DOT's request for TIP amendments, Mr. Mote said that the GDOT program from 2009 – 2013 is constrained. Beyond 2013 it is not. The Department's intent was to request amendments to the FY 2008-2011 TIP necessary for balancing FY 2009 projects and including the FY 2009 and 2010 stimulus projects, then use the FY 2011-2013 projects for discussion of TIP development.

Mr. Thomson agreed to focus the recommendations for the TIP on FY 2009 and FY 2010. Then they will work on the TIP update to include the other years.

Ms. Jane Love suggested that any stimulus requests that aren't already consistent with the LRTP be omitted from recommendations for the TIP amendment, since the requests already total more money than this area is likely to receive. Otherwise, the MPO needs to begin considering any LRTP amendments, through its two-meeting process, now. Mr. Mote commented that it is OK, when doing LRTP amendments, to indicate stimulus money as the funding source.

Mr. Thomson will recommend to the MPO board to approve non-stimulus projects and stimulus projects amended to FY 2009 and FY 2010 TIP.

In regard to transit projects, Mr. Thomson recommended that CAT get together with FTA and work out what projects are eligible for stimulus money. Mr. Mote noted that any kind of federal money spent in Savannah/Chatham County must show up in the TIP, including transit projects.

TCC Action: it was agreed that a vote on the TCC endorsement regarding amendments to FY2008-2011 TIP would be postponed until a special meeting convenes on Tuesday, February 24, 2009 at 5:00 PM for the purpose of a final review and vote.

C. Endorsement of the amendment to the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Mark Wilkes reported that this amendment is to move \$90,674.14 in unobligated PL (planning) funds from FY 2008 to FY 2009 in order to access those funds. He asked the committee to endorse this amendment.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the amendment to the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program.

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the amendment to the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program carried with none opposed.

D. Chatham Area Transit Paratransit Plan Update

Mr. Michael Adams reported that Chatham Area Transit (CAT) is updating the Paratransit Plan from 1992. Mr. Wilkes noted that this is an urgent matter since it was due in January. Ms. Love noted a comment made at the ACAT meeting regarding wording in the Executive Summary. Ms. Jean Iaderosa confirmed that this verbiage has been changed as requested and will be presented to the CAT Board on February 27, 2009. Also, changes regarding the making of reservations will be made in April once the overlay of the CAT software route system onto the Teleride software is completed.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the Chatham Area Transit Paratransit Plan Update as amended.

TCC Action: the motion to endorse the Chatham Area Transit Paratransit Plan Update as amended carried with none opposed.

III. Status Reports

A. MPO 2009 Calendar of Activities

Mr. Thomson referred members to the packet of information which contains the calendar of activities. It is offered to give committee members an idea of what activities are coming up this year, including start dates and completion dates.

B. CUTS/MPO Federal Certification Review

Ms. Jones explained that FHWA and FTA conducts certification reviews every four years. March 10th and 11th will be the on-site interview for this process. The public meeting will be on March 10 at 5:00 p.m. She added that transportation engineers and a representative

from GAO will be sitting in on the meetings. Mr. Thomson invited the members of the TCC to attend the daytime meetings on March 10th. Ms. Jones noted that the agenda does not include a private meeting with the MPO Board Members, but there will be time for such a meeting (between the day session and the public evening session) if they would like one.

C. CUTS/MPO Long Range Plan Kick-off

Mr. Thomson noted that a presentation on this kick-off will be made to the Policy Committee next week.

IV. Agency Reports

A. CUTS Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Ms. Teresa Brenner reported that the committee endorsed the CAT Paratransit Update. They heard reports from CAT and Teleride. Teleride's report included statistics on the complaint line. The number of complaints from October to the present was 19. Complaints used to be about driver attitude but now they are mostly about capacity issues.

B. CUTS Citizens Advisory Committee

No report at this time.

C. Federal Highway Administration

Ms. Jones reported they will be doing performance measurements and planning in Macon on February 23rd. On February 25th there will be another economic stimulus tele-conference at 9:00 AM. She is taking notes on these tele-conferences. The recertification for Savannah is March 10th and 11th. The Planning (PL) Course they are offering is May 12th and 13th.

D. Federal Transit Administration

No report at this time.

E. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Scott referred to the status report of area projects that had been distributed today. As several projects had been discussed already, she asked if there were any questions. Mr. Thomson asked if Whitfield Ave. widening was ready for letting. The right-of-way probably will not be finished until March 2010. The right-of-way phase funding is split between two fiscal years.

F. Chatham County

Mr. Davenport reported no significant changes, but noted that many smaller projects were coming to conclusion. Truman Pkwy. Phase 5 will keep them busy. He noted that the

County's first list of stimulus candidates was submitted in December before anyone knew what rules would apply, and that is why it included several paving projects for dirt roads. He is aware that now these are not eligible for transportation stimulus funds. Mr. Thomson mentioned that paving dirt roads might qualify under other parts of the recovery act, such as under community development instead of transportation.

G. City of Savannah

Mr. Weiner reported that the revised concept report on the Gwinnett St. widening was submitted for review. Comments from the city and the MPC were submitted to the consultant. He also reported that construction plans for President St./McIntosh Blvd. widening are about 90% complete and right-of-way acquisition is 95% complete.

H. Chatham Area Transit Authority

Ms. Iaderosa reported that CAT has ordered 11 hybrid buses for expected delivery at the end of 2009. They are looking to order five hybrid paratransit vehicles and five more regular buses; new fare boxes; and ticket vending machines. They are also preparing to accept credit cards for fare payment. She reported that Veolia Transit has been signed to manage the CAT system. They are experienced at putting together regional plans. Mr. Brandon commented that Veolia Transit is taking a very large, long view of transit and would like to do more than just handling CAT. Veolia aspirations may include shuttle services, rail, and bicycles. They appear to have a reserve of cash to invest with the payoff coming in the future.

Ms. Iaderosa reported that CAT is poised to begin the plan with the Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center for a transit system serving an eight county area. When Teleride scales back, this new service will be able to serve those that were dropped by the Teleride service. Disabled individuals will be delivered to their final destination. Camden and Bulloch counties opted out of the new regional service.

Mr. Thomson reported that Mr. Patrick Shay, a member of the CAT Board, has been appointed to the MPO Board to fill the CAT Board seat on that committee.

Ms. Iaderosa encouraged those who work with transit, parking, traffic, and/or roadways to participate in the Georgia Transit Association. They have regular conferences and meetings and a lobbyist in Atlanta supporting and advancing issues for transit, both urban and rural.

I. Georgia Ports Authority

No report at this time.

J. Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport

No report at this time.

K. Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center

Ms. Tricia Reynolds spoke about the Regional Transportation Assessment. They have hired a consultant to do an initial baseline study of the transportation currently going on in all 10 counties. This should be completed in June. The consultant is presenting the findings to her board on June 10th. Mr. Thomson is considering having them present to the Policy Committee in late June.

L. City of Garden City

No report at this time.

M. City of Tybee Island

No report at this time.

V. Other Business

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 February 19, 2009 meeting of the Technical Coordinating Committee adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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