

**COASTAL REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
DECEMBER 2024 MPO MEETINGS**

Agenda Item: Amendments to the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

Presenter: Wykoda Wang, MPO Staff

Summary: The CORE MPO's 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP), Moving Forward Together 2050, was adopted by the CORE MPO Board in August 2024. The MTP can be amended as project scopes and cost estimates change or new needs are identified.

According to the CORE MPO's Participation Plan adopted in October 2024, any proposed changes to the MTP can be sorted into three categories.

- Administrative Modification – 1) Making a minor revision (as defined in GDOT's STIP Amendment Process) to a project that is already in the MTP's financially constrained plan; OR 2) Adding, deleting, or modifying a project in the MTP's vision (illustrative) plan, provided that any added projects come from an adopted study accepted by the CORE MPO.
- One Step Amendment – 1) The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); AND 2) The request **would not** affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan or TIP.
- Two Step Amendment – 1) The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); AND 2) The request **would** affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan (and TIP in many cases).

The key to any MTP amendment is to make sure that the MTP is financially balanced in the impacted cost band after the amendment, impacting both the total project costs and the expected revenues. The MTP amendment process for the proposed project change varies (either two-step or one-step), so it's important to determine what kind of amendment is being pursued.

FHWA Request

In September 2024, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requested that amendments be made to the FY 2024 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for discretionary grant funded projects. This is to separate the discretionary grant program from the formula program.

Since the TIP is a sub-set of the MTP, the MTP/TIP consistency needs to be checked. If the projects are not included in the 2050 MTP or major changes are being made to the 2050 MTP projects, administrative modifications or amendments need to be made first to the 2050 MTP before TIP amendments can take place.

In the 2050 MTP, the discretionary grant funded projects are listed separately.

- Two projects in the FHWA request have already been included in the 2050 MTP when the plan was adopted in August 2024 - Savannah I-16 Ramp Removal Project and Port of Savannah Renewable Fuel Project. There are no changes.
- One project in the FHWA request is included in the 2050 MTP but there is a change in total cost - Voltera Electrification of American Ports (VEAP). The project cost in the 2050 MTP is \$9,750,000 which includes the federal grant award and the required 20% local match. The new information provided by FHWA shows that Voltera is providing over match, so the total cost is \$26,019,395. The 2050 MTP needs to be amended to reflect the updated cost.
- One project is not included in the 2050 MTP and recently received the Safe Street for All (SS4A) grant funds - City of Savannah 37th Street Safety Improvements & Supplemental Planning. This new project needs to be amended into the 2050 MTP.

The four projects are listed in the table below.

PROJECT	PROGRAM FISCAL YEAR	GRANT RECIPIENT AGENCY	PROJECT DESCRIPTION	TYPE OF WORK	FUND SOURCE	FEDERAL GRANT AMOUNT	LOCAL MATCH	FUNDING TOTAL
Savannah I-16 Ramp Removal Project	2023	City of Savannah	The City of Savannah will use the awarded grant funds to do the following activities related to the proposed removal of the I-16 flyover exit ramp over MLK Jr. Boulevard to Montgomery Street: Equitable Redevelopment Plan, Concept Design, Environmental Studies, and Community Outreach Program.	Planning	RCP	\$1,800,000	\$450,000	\$2,250,000
Port of Savannah Renewable Fuel Project	2023	Georgia Ports Authority	The Georgia Ports Authority will receive \$7.5 million to conduct a four-year pilot program at the Port of Savannah that will expand the use of low-emission and zero-emission equipment to carry out daily port activities and reduce port-related emissions from idling trucks. The project will replace petroleum diesel fuel used by 621 trucks with renewable, low-emission diesel fuel.	Technology	RTEPF	\$7,517,066	\$28,842,328	\$36,359,394
Voltera Electrification of American Ports (VEAP)	2023	Voltera Power, LLC	Voltera Power, a zero-emissions refueling infrastructure provider, will receive \$7.8 million to build a large-scale charging project near the Port of Savannah. The project will reduce emissions from port-related traffic by providing parking and charging services for medium- and heavy-duty electric vehicle (EV) fleets.	Technology	RTEPF	\$7,805,819	\$18,213,577	\$26,019,395
City of Savannah 37th Street Safety Improvements & Supplemental Planning	2024	City of Savannah	The City of Savannah is awarded \$9.9 million in funding to improve safety on 37th Street. The project will consist of upgrades to 15 intersections that need systemic safety improvements, such as updated signals and timing, dedicated left turns with protected phasing, sidewalks, crosswalks, and extended bicycle lanes.	Construction /Planning	SS4A	\$9,999,520	\$2,499,880	\$12,499,400

Green Text - No Change to 2050 MTP

Red Text - Amendments to 2050 MTP

CORE MPO Analysis

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) / Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) has created many discretionary programs and has made the funding directly available to local municipalities and various agencies. The discretionary programs have their own funding award, programming and implementation cycles and are difficult to track. It's also very hard to track who gets what grant funds.

As a general rule, if the grant funds are awarded through the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or the Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the recipients will sign agreements with either FHWA or FTA. In addition, the awarded funds will need to be included in the MPO's plans or programs – project funds need to be included in the MTP and TIP, and planning funds need to be included in the UPWP.

Moving forward, whenever a discretionary grant is awarded through FHWA or FTA to an agency within the CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area, FHWA or FTA will send CORE MPO an updated prepopulated version of the discretionary program table. CORE MPO then includes the new grant funds either in the MTP/TIP through MTP/TIP amendment or in the UPWP.

The 2050 MTP must be financially constrained in each cost band, meaning the total project costs must be equal to or less than the expected revenues for that cost band. **Since the discretionary grant funds are separated from the formula revenues, inclusion of the grant funded projects into the 2050 MTP will not impact other projects in the plan.**

CORE MPO Action for December 2024

Based on the analysis above, staff suggest that the CORE MPO Board approve the proposed 2050 MTP amendments to

1. revise the total cost of the Voltera Electrification of American Ports (VEAP) project; and
2. add the City of Savannah 37th Street Safety Improvements & Supplemental Planning project.

Public Involvement

Public participation procedures for MTP amendments include public advertisement, a public hearing, a 15-day comment period, and response to all comments, either individually or in summary form. CORE MPO advertised for the comment period (December 4, 2024 – December 18, 2024) and the public hearing (December 18, 2024) on the Sunday, December 1, 2024 Savannah Morning News. Information about the comment period and the public hearing was also posted on the MPO web site and socio media as well as provided to the local media contacts, neighborhood associations, consultation agencies, and the contacts in the MPO database. Any comments received will be reported to the CORE MPO Board and advisory committees in December 2024.

Recommendation: For TCC endorsement and CORE MPO Board approval of amendments to the CORE MPO's 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan. For BPAC and TEPIAC information.

Appendix

- Appendix A: Excerpt of CORE MPO Participation Plan Regarding MTP Amendments
- Appendix B: Public Notice on Proposed 2050 MTP Amendments
- Appendix C: Request for 2050 MTP and TIP Amendments
- Appendix D: Resolution for 2050 MTP Amendments

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Appendix A: Excerpt of CORE MPO Participation Plan Regarding MTP Amendments

Participation for Changes to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

While the MPO updates the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on a regular schedule, there will be many instances during the cycle when either administrative changes or amendments are required. Generally administrative changes are minor changes which do not alter the original project intent or require financial rebalancing of the plan, while amendments are changes that do have those types of impacts on the plan.

Because the TIP focuses on an immediate four-year time frame, it includes the more active phases of projects, and therefore requests for changes tend to focus on the TIP. However, the longer range MTP is the guiding document. As one can infer from the descriptions of the MTP and the TIP above, the TIP is a subset of projects (or certain phases of projects) listed within the MTP's financially constrained plan. In order to qualify for federal funds, new projects must be consistent with the MTP before they are eligible for inclusion in the TIP. Changes to projects that are already in the TIP (and thus also in the MTP) are documented in an addendum to the MTP.

Any person requesting project revisions, additions, or deletions to the CORE MPO TIP or MTP should send to CORE MPO staff written details of the request, including:

- Project description or changes in existing descriptions;
- Project location and termini or changes in existing location and termini;
- Costs of each phase of the project (new projects) or changes in existing costs;
- Expected authorization year of each phase or changes in those (if the request involves the immediate four-year TIP window);
- Funding sources or changes in funding sources (if the request involves the immediate four-year TIP window);
- Reason for change.

CORE MPO staff may request additional information if needed. Once all of the necessary information is received, MPO staff will use the information to determine whether the request is a TIP administrative modification (according to the description in GDOT's STIP amendment process in Appendix K), a TIP amendment that does not entail an MTP amendment, a TIP amendment that does entail an MTP amendment, or alternatively an MTP amendment that does not affect the TIP.

The guidelines below are used to distinguish between administrative modification and amendments. While most TIP amendments can be accomplished in one MPO meeting cycle (a one-step process), note that MTP amendments require MPO Board action at two separate meetings. TIP amendments which also necessitate an MTP amendment, will therefore require at least two meeting cycles in order to accomplish the necessary MTP amendment prior to action on the TIP amendment. The range of processes described below is intended to allow adequate review of requests, while recognizing that flexibility based on the context of the request will improve efficiency at multiple levels of government.

Procedures for Changes to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Administrative Modification

The following types of requests are considered administrative modifications to the TIP or MTP, as long as the requested change does not require public review and comment.

- Making a *minor* revision (as defined in Appendix K: GDOT’s STIP Amendment Process) to a project that is already in the MTP’s financially constrained plan;
- Adding, deleting, or modifying a project in the MTP’s vision (illustrative) plan, provided that any added projects come from an adopted study accepted by the CORE MPO.

When the CORE MPO staff determines that the request is an administrative modification, the process consists of the following steps:

- 1) Transmittal of Confirmation: MPO staff transmits a confirmation to GDOT.
- 2) MPO staff posts the updated portion of the document(s) on the MPO web site.
- 3) GDOT sends a monthly list of notifications about administrative modifications to all involved parties, with change summaries sent on a monthly basis to the FHWA and FTA.

Projects that use zero federal funding, and that are not expected to need federal funding in the future, are not required to be included in the CORE MPO MTP or TIP. If a requester nevertheless would like to have these projects listed, then they can be included in an addendum to the MTP, with CORE MPO Board notification. Such projects can be listed in the TIP through an administrative modification.

CORE MPO reserves the right to re-start the change process as an amendment, in cases where it is found that the modification is controversial.

One-step Amendment

The following situations are considered one-step amendments.

- The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); AND
- The request *would not* affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP’s financially constrained plan or TIP.

The process consists of the following steps:

- 1) CORE MPO Board Meeting: At a CORE MPO Board meeting occurring no less than 21 days after receipt of the request, the recommendations of the MPO staff and the appropriate CORE MPO advisory committees will be provided to the CORE MPO Board. A public hearing will be held at that MPO Board meeting, unless held at an earlier date or time. The CORE MPO Board will decide at the conclusion of the hearing whether to reject the proposal, approve the proposal, or approve the proposal with modifications.
- 2) In instances where the project costs or other details differ from those listed in the adopted MTP, the updated project information will be noted in an addendum to the MTP.

Public participation procedures for one-step amendments include public advertisement, a public hearing, a 15-day comment period, and response to all comments, either individually or in summary form. Information about the comment period and public hearing also are posted on MPO web site and provided to the media contacts, neighborhood associations, and consultation agencies in the MPO contact database.

Two-step Amendment

The following situations are considered two-step amendments. The second step of the process may include a TIP amendment as well, in many cases:

- The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); OR
- The request *would* affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan (and TIP in many cases).

The process consists of the following steps:

- 1) First CORE MPO Board meeting: The CORE MPO staff and the appropriate advisory committees will recommend to the MPO Board whether additional review of the amendment to the MTP is warranted. The CORE MPO Board will then decide either to reject the proposal or authorize further review of the proposal.
- 2) Second CORE MPO Board meeting: If further review is authorized by the CORE MPO Board in the step above, the MPO staff will obtain and review additional information and present its findings and recommendation to the appropriate CORE MPO advisory committees. The recommendations of the MPO staff and the committees will then be provided to the CORE MPO Board. A public hearing will be held at that CORE MPO Board meeting, unless held at an earlier date or time. The CORE MPO Board will decide at the conclusion of the hearing whether to reject the amendment to the MTP, approve it, or approve it with modifications. If the proposal also affects the TIP, then the CORE MPO Board may consider the TIP amendment at this same meeting or at a later meeting.

Public participation procedures for two-step amendments include public advertisement, a public hearing, a 15-day comment period, and response to all comments, either individually or in summary form. Information about the comment period and public hearing also are posted on MPO web site and provided to the media contacts, neighborhood associations, and consultation agencies in the MPO contact database.

TIP Amendment Only

If a project or study that is already consistent with the CORE MPO MTP, as determined by the Executive Director, requires a change that does not qualify as an administrative modification, as defined above, then a TIP amendment can be considered without the need for an MTP amendment. The TIP amendment process requires public advertisement, a 15-day comment period and response to all comments, either individually or in a summary form. There is no requirement for a public hearing. The amendment follows the usual MPO Committee process for action.

The use of federal funds requires completion of the environmental process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Right-of-way negotiations may not take place until successful completion of the NEPA process. Final location and design of an amended project would be a function of the NEPA process. In Georgia, the Department of Transportation oversees the public participation in the environmental process. The MPO facilitates the participation process by providing early and continuous planning level input and by assisting GDOT in disseminating public meeting notices and project information.

Appendix B: Public Notice on Proposed 2050 MTP Amendments

December 2024

Public Notice for 2050 MTP Amendments

The Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO), the transportation planning agency for the Savannah urbanized area, is requesting the public to review and provide comments on a draft report titled: Amendments to 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The report includes proposed updates to the 2050 MTP. Copies of the draft MTP amendment report will be available for review at the Live Oak public libraries, the Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) office, the MPC website at <https://www.thempc.org/Core>, and other public review agencies. Any changes to the MTP amendment report will be posted on the website.

The comment period starts on **Wednesday, December 4, 2024**, until the close of business on **Wednesday, December 18, 2024**. Comments are accepted via text, email, or mail. Please send your comments to Wykoda Wang via:

Text: Send texts to wangw@thempc.org

Email: wange@thempc.org

Mail: Metropolitan Planning Commission, 110 E. State Street, Savannah, GA 31401

CORE MPO will host one (1) hybrid public meeting to answer questions and accept comments on the proposed MTP Amendments in conjunction with the December 2024 CORE MPO Board meeting. The public can attend the meeting in person or virtually via Go-To-Webinar. The meeting time, location and link are listed below.

CORE MPO Board Meeting
Wednesday, December 18, 2024
10:00 a.m.
Metropolitan Planning Commission
110 E. State Street, Savannah GA 31401

The virtual meeting will be conducted with Go-To-Webinar, so advanced registration is required. Please register at <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/5702437173725004636>. After registration, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

For a complete list of public review agencies, additional information regarding the draft MTP amendments, and information regarding the virtual public meeting, please call (912) 651-1466.

Disclaimer: The Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) and Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) are committed to the principle of affirmative action and prohibit discrimination against otherwise qualified persons on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, familial status, parental status, political beliefs, genetic information, income, or other protected category in its recruitment, employment, facility and program accessibility or services.

MPC and CORE MPO are committed to enforcing the provisions of the Civil Rights Act, Title VI, and all the related requirements mentioned above. CORE MPO is also committed to taking positive and realistic affirmative steps to ensure the protection of rights and opportunities for all persons affected by its plans and programs.

Appendix C: Request for 2050 MTP/FY 2024 – 2027 TIP Amendments

From: Longo, Joseph (FHWA) <joseph.longo@dot.gov>
Sent: Thursday, November 7, 2024 2:13 PM
To: Wykoda Wang <wangw@thempc.org>; Asia Hernton <herntona@thempc.org>
Cc: Kaniz Sathi <KSathi@dot.ga.gov>; Vivian Canizares <mcanizares@dot.ga.gov>
Subject: RE: CUT OFF CORE MPO OCTOBER AGENDA TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1st

Wykoda, Asia,

Thanks for meeting just now. As discussed, attached is the informational matrix with the accurate project information and the new SS4A project.

Going forward, whenever a discretionary grant is awarded to an agency within the MPA, I will send you an updated prepopulated version to include during the next scheduled TIP amendment.

Thanks,

Joseph Longo
Community Planner
FHWA Georgia Division
75 Ted Turner Dr SW, Suite 1000
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: 404-562-3641

From: Longo, Joseph (FHWA) <joseph.longo@dot.gov>
Sent: Thursday, September 26, 2024 3:49 PM
To: Wykoda Wang <wangw@thempc.org>; Kieron Coffield <coffieldk@thempc.org>; Asia Hernton <herntona@thempc.org>; Anna McQuarrie <mcquarriea@thempc.org>
Cc: Pamela Everett <everettp@thempc.org>; Melanie Wilson <wilsonm@thempc.org>; Vivian Canizares <mcanizares@dot.ga.gov>; Sathi, Kaniz S <KSathi@dot.ga.gov>
Subject: RE: CUT OFF CORE MPO OCTOBER AGENDA TUESDAY, OCTOBER 1st

Good afternoon all,

I'm following up on last Friday's discussion about the MPO incorporating GDOT's new [STIP/TIP Amendment Process](#), specifically the Informational Appendix for discretionary grants, congressionally directed spending, and FLAP.

To be consistent with the [STIP Informational Appendix](#), please amend the TIP this meeting cycle to reflect the three discretionary grants in an informational appendix. I've attached the matrix template prefilled with the accurate funding amounts. The three grant projects were [previously amended](#) into the TIP as individual project pages.

Please let me know if you have any questions or concerns. Your flexibility on this is appreciated.

Thank you,

Joseph Longo
Community Planner
FHWA Georgia Division
75 Ted Turner Dr SW, Suite 1000
Atlanta, GA 30303
Phone: 404-562-3641

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Appendix D: Resolution for 2050 MTP Amendments

Resolution to Amend the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan of the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

WHEREAS, the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) desires to adopt amendments to the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan called Moving Forward Together 2050 for the CORE MPO transportation planning area; and

WHEREAS, the proposed MTP amendments are to 1) revise the total cost of the Voltera Electrification of American Ports (VEAP) project, and 2) add the City of Savannah 37th Street Safety Improvements & Supplemental Planning project; and

WHEREAS, an analysis was conducted, and it was determined that the proposed plan amendments will not negatively impact the financial balance of the 2050 MTP since the discretionary grant funded projects are separated from the formula funded projects; and

WHEREAS, CORE MPO, in accordance with the adopted Participation Plan, has completed a 15-day public review and comment period for the proposed MTP amendments and has addressed all received comments; and

WHEREAS, CORE MPO has conducted a public hearing for the proposed amendments, and has taken into consideration comments made at the public hearing; and

WHEREAS, all requirements of the Participation Plan pertaining to MTP amendments have been met.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization adopts the amendments to the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan as shown in the summary of MTP amendment report with any corrections based upon the motion of the December 18, 2024 meeting.

Approved this day, December 18, 2024.

Chester A. Ellis, Chairperson
Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization