



# MPC Headlines

## Special Edition: MPC Projects

A Publication of the Metropolitan Planning Commission

VOLUME III, ISSUE 3

[www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org)

### Inside this issue:

*The MPC details our current projects and their impacts on furthering the goal of a sustainable community.*

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Dear Reader,

This edition of *MPC Headlines* attempts to give you information about many of the projects that

we have underway and some we have accomplished. We hope you can see the common theme that connects these efforts, which is to plan and build a greater community that is sustainable, mobile and prosperous.

Our efforts are focused around the following strategies, and are further highlighted in the associated articles of this issue:

- Building on and extending the concepts of the Oglethorpe Plan
- Ensuring connectivity and mobility for the greater region
- Protecting our cultural, historic and natural assets and planning a sustainable community
- Community Building and Participation

#### **Building on and extending the concepts of the Oglethorpe Plan**

Savannah's unique grid pattern of squares, streets and lanes originally initiated by James Oglethorpe in 1733 is a prime example of sustainable planning. Our goal is to protect and continue this pattern that provides a livable, walkable and convenient lifestyle that many communities in the country are trying to imitate. Our central area of the city has the desired quality of life for soon to retire Baby Boomers and Generation X, Y and Z'ers alike, so we are planning for growth in this area.



Many of our efforts to preserve and extend the Oglethorpe plan have been to focused on protecting our historic fabric (Historic District Ordinance update) or planning for future expansion of the Oglethorpe plan (Unified Zoning Ordinance) or to enhance its livability properties (Total Mobility Plan, Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, Transit Vision Plan and Streetcar planning). Probably two of the best examples of expanding and reestablishing the Oglethorpe pattern is the East Savannah Riverfront Civic Master Plan, which has won several National and International awards for preservation, and the I-16 Overpass Removal project which is working to reestablish about ten acres of our urban landscape in the MLK Jr. and Montgomery Street corridors.

#### **Ensuring connectivity and mobility for the greater region**

In order to ensure that the central city area thrives and remains the center of the region's economy, we are working on plans to improve connectivity to other parts of our region while making sure that transportation projects enhance and sustain our neighborhoods job centers and provide for a choice of mobility options. Robert Puentes of the Brookings Institute writes:

*"Today the challenge (of our transportation policy) is to take transportation out of its box in order to ensure the health, vitality and sustainability of our metropolitan areas."*

Our transportation plans are centered on connecting people to their homes, jobs, markets and more while supporting a growing central

core that maximizes our land and provides convenient, context sensitive, and cost-effective gateways for people to come and go. Importantly, we need to ensure adequate capacity of our key routes to provide for continued economic vitality and emergency evacuation in the event of a hurricane or other natural disaster.

The Transit-Mobility Vision Plan, SR 204 Corridor, SR 21 Corridor and US 80 Bridges studies currently underway are examples of regional planning efforts to ensure capacity to the economic center of our region and provide for our safety.

#### **Protecting our cultural, historic and natural assets and planning a sustainable community**

After many years of being ignored, concepts of sustainability and livability have become a central theme for agencies across the United States. The *Unified Chatham County - Savannah Tricentennial Comprehensive Plan*, adopted in 2006, united the principles of economic growth, social equity and environmental quality for our community. The Community Agenda of the comprehensive plan establishes these principles as goals, and MPC planners are employing strategies for achieving those goals and making them a reality in our planning, policies, processes and products.

We are active supporters of the Chatham Environmental Forum, the Healthy Savannah Initiative and have internal programs aimed at creating both sustainable business practices and plans for the

*Continued, see Page 2*



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*“Preserving greenspace, protecting water quality, and creating new public recreational opportunities are at the heart of the Chatham County Resource Protection Commission’s (CCRPC) efforts.”*



*Whitemarsh Preserve*

*Continued from page 1*

community. One example is the implementation of our E-Agenda system, which saves paper and gives citizens easy access to all materials related to any of the 12 boards we serve. Another is the MPC Action Plan for Adapting to Coastal Risks, which among other things will help us incorporate future climate change impacts into our infrastructure decisions.

### **Community Building and Participation**

We strive to be a leader in planning, development and preserving a greater community through partnerships and an open process. We are often the first stop for citizens to gain access to the planning process and to influence the outcomes of planning decisions such as zoning and site plan reviews. We have a strong commitment to customer service and always assist citizens in navigating other branches our government as well as ours.

We strive to form beneficial partnerships in our planning projects. We are a resource to the community on planning issues. We help to foster a creative problem solving forum for community issues. We try to originate new ideas for consideration in the public sphere.

Our mission is to provide an accessible planning process, sound professional planning products, and recommendations that ensure a greater quality of life for all to enjoy a community that is historic, sustainable, mobile and prosperous.

As you read this issue you can judge how we are doing.

Tom Thomson, Executive Director

## **Keeping Chatham Green**

*Joanna Bounds  
Resource Protection Planner*

The Chatham County Resource Protection Commission (CCRPC) helps address the Natural Resource goals of the Chatham County-Savannah Comprehensive Plan by preserving, protecting and restoring coastal resources, open spaces, conservation areas, and threatened and endangered plant and animal habitat. Specifically, the CCRPC works within the eight municipalities and unincorporated areas of the County to identify sites of ecological and historic significance and to find ways to protect and conserve these areas.

At the close of 2009, the Chatham County Commission voted, as recommended by the CCRPC, to acquire the 175-acre Pennyworth Island for greenspace. Through this protection, the County and the CCRPC have ensured that the Island’s 170 acres of brackish marsh will continue to filter and improve the quality of the Savannah River, while its five acres of maritime forest will forever provide habitat for a variety of wild-

life, including migratory songbirds like the rare Painted Bunting.

Future plans for Pennyworth Island include creating a conservation easement to secure the Island’s perpetual preservation, completing a National Register of Historic Places nomination (the property served as a rice plantation throughout the 1800s and was owned by several prominent men of the time, including the former mayor of Charleston and governor of South Carolina), and potentially making the site available for public access. The CCRPC will also create a management plan for Pennyworth Island, as well as for every other property purchased by the County for greenspace. These plans describe the uses allowed for each site and discuss the need for improvements on the property.

The CCRPC has also recently completed a management plan for the Whitemarsh Preserve, a 150-acre tract of land purchased by the County in 2000. The Preserve, located on Whitemarsh Island at the corner of Bryan Woods Road and Johnny Mercer Boulevard, contains several short trails, a two-acre grassy field, 137 acres of

maritime forest habitat, and 13 acres of wetlands. Through the management plan, the CCRPC recommends allowing and improving public passive recreation (for example, hiking and mountain biking) on the property. No motorized vehicles are to be allowed and uses are to be restricted in wetland areas to preserve these sensitive habitats.

In the coming year, the CCRPC will pursue the protection of additional greenspace, create new recreational trails on already purchased lands, and continue to identify and evaluate lands and corridors of ecological and historic importance. Anyone interested in nominating a site for the group to consider should contact Joanna Bounds, by phone at 912-651-1467 or by email at [boundsj@thempc.org](mailto:boundsj@thempc.org).

Members of the public are also encouraged to attend CCRPC meetings, held at the Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission at 3:30 PM on the third Thursday of every other month beginning in May.

# Historic District Zoning Ordinance Overview



[www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org)

*Sarah Ward, Director  
Historic Preservation*

Historic Preservation and sustainability are both about our enduring legacy on future generations and both philosophies strive to reduce impacts on both our natural and cultural resources.

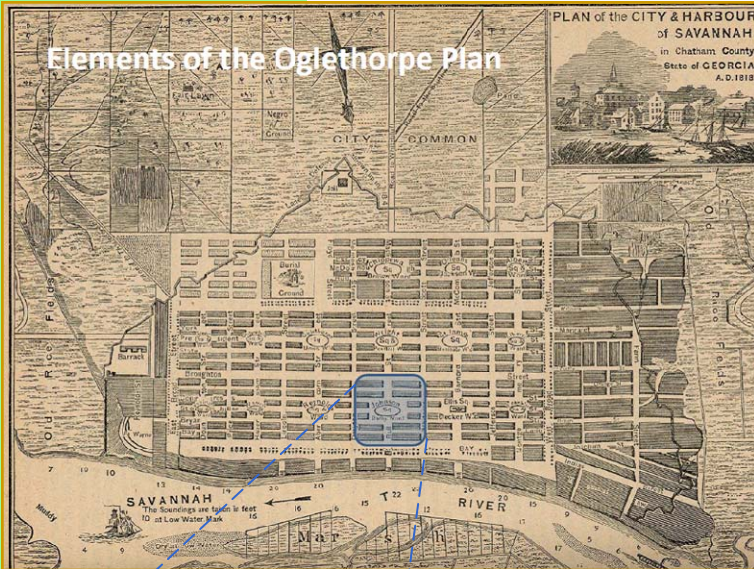
Sustainable development can be defined as development which meets the needs of the present while preserving the environment and not encumbering future generations. Historic Preservation and sustainability are really two principals that share many common objectives and goals.

for large-scale development were incorporated to hold development accountable for the preservation of our livable city and to allow it to evolve to meet the needs of future generations.

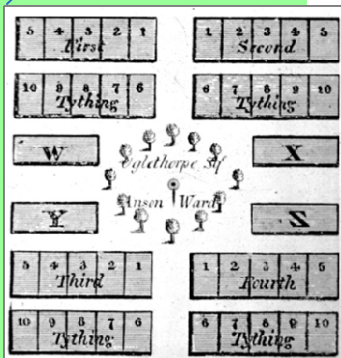
The Oglethorpe Plan (see figures below) is essential to the continued livability of our downtown area. It provides more open public space in the urban core of the city than any other urban center in the country: providing downtown residents, workers, and visitors access to ample open space with generous tree canopies within walking distance of most buildings. The ward system that makes up the plan consists of a series of four tithing blocks (each containing ten lots) and four trust blocks around a central public square, divided by a series of streets and lanes. The ward structure established a standardized hierarchy in land use planning for placement of public open spaces, location of institutional facilities primarily on trust lots, while allowing a mix of residential and commercial uses on the tithing blocks. The ward module itself was then repeated throughout the City allowing for continued growth that provided connectivity and all of the basic elements of what we in planning refer to today as “smart streets,” including ample sidewalks and tree laws while adhering to basic principles of scale, capacity, and speed. Preservation of this plan was recognized to be one of the fundamental techniques to providing a sustainable living city that could endure the test of time.

Interior’s Standards for the Treatment of Historic Properties parallel the goals of sustainable development by encouraging property owners and stewards of historic buildings to have as few impacts on properties as possible in order to preserve the cultural heritage of the site and not impact future generations from interpreting and restoring the original design of the building. There are several preservation approaches that are appropriate when assessing the needs of the current user with the historic building. These approaches include conservation, restoration, rehabilitation and finally reconstruction. These approaches are very similar to the environmental notion of recycling; reduce (conserve), reuse (restoration), then recycle (rehabilitation). All preservation approaches must identify their impacts on historic resources and take measures to ensure that their undertakings are reversible.

Included in the Historic Zoning Ordinance are new standards that ensure our Large-Scale Development, defined as development whose footprint is equal to or greater than 9,000 square feet or is greater than five stories (four stories in residential zoning districts), would be compatible with its historic context, the Oglethorpe Plan, and would be more adaptable to future uses as the market evolves overtime. Rehabilitation of historic buildings is a common practice especially in Savannah. The Savannah College of Art and Design (SCAD) has adaptively reused numerous historic large-scale buildings, including former schools, office buildings, medical facilities, commercial and residential buildings, and even hotels. The ability of historic buildings to be adaptively reused is due to their sustainable qualities, especially endurance. Other qualities include the site



Elements of the Oglethorpe Plan



In some respects, these terms can actually be used interchangeably and as indicated above, both terms are used to describe the other. In 2009, the Historic District section of the City of Savannah Zoning Ordinance (Section 8-3030) was revised to incorporate new standards that would allow the district to grow in a way that would ultimately be more sustainable. Preservation of the Oglethorpe Plan, adoption of the Secretary of the Interior’s Guidelines and Standards for Historic Buildings, and specific standards

for large-scale development were incorporated to hold development accountable for the preservation of our livable city and to allow it to evolve to meet the needs of future generations.

The U.S. Secretary of the

*Continued on page 4*

# Comprehensive Planning for Sustainability

*Dennis Hutton, Director  
Comprehensive Planning*

Recently a researcher from Minnesota called to ask if we knew the reason the economy in Savannah had rebounded faster than in almost any other part of the country. The City of Macon called to ask for a copy of our Service Delivery Strategy to use as a model. Someone else heard that Savannah had one of the greenest ordinances in the Southeast and wanted a copy. The Coastal Regional Commission asked for a copy of the buffer program we developed for Hunter Army Airfield and Fort Stewart to use as a model for the regional Joint Land Use Study. These are some of the calls we get in the Comprehensive Planning Department, and they all are related to our Comprehensive Plan.

There's more: development and transportation planners at the MPC are working with Healthy Savannah to understand how planning affects the health of the

community; we are working with neighborhoods and industries in West Savannah to understand how zoning can improve the interface between these two critical components of the community. We are working on the Non-motorized Transportation Plan for Chatham County, helping the Natural Resources Department in their efforts to implement the Coastal Stormwater Supplement, assisting with the Public Participation phase of the Unified Zoning Ordinance, and actively participating in formulating the State Water Plan. We have been mainstays of support in the Chatham Environmental Forum's roadmap to making Chatham the greenest county in Georgia.

As always, the MPC Comprehensive Planning Department attempts to seek inspiration and guidance from the past as we chart a bold new course for the future. Please contact Dennis at [huttond@thempc.org](mailto:huttond@thempc.org) or at 912-651-1450.

## Zoning: Promoting Sustainability

*Charlotte Moore, AICP  
Director of Special Projects*

Zoning is one of many development ordinances that can be utilized as an implementation tool for a more sustainable community. In a nutshell, zoning regulates how land is used and has a foundation in the Comprehensive Plan. The Comprehensive Plan is a formal policy guide adopted by local government that addresses a variety of community elements, such as land use, housing, natural resources and transportation.

The numerous goals, objectives and strategies for each element are adopted as part of the Comprehensive Plan and serve as a

guide to help develop portions of the Unified Zoning Ordinance (UZO). The UZO is an effort to update and unify the existing zoning ordinances for Chatham County and the city of Savannah which were adopted in the early 1960s, an era when sustainable land use practices fell out of favor. For example, the increase in the number of single use zoning districts, such as residential-only, have created a greater reliance on the automobile because shopping and work opportunities are farther away. Prior to the adoption of the zoning, mixed use neighborhoods were typical and cars were used less as residents could often walk or bike to their desired location, or take a bus or streetcar for farther distances. Today's land use pat-

*Continued (Historic Zoning)*

itself and the orientation of the building, scale, materials, large amounts of transparency and access to daylight, multiple points of entry enhancing the pedestrian realm and contributing to the livability of the city. Diversity within the building itself, allowing for multiple tenants and a mix of uses in our downtown core allows for more flexibility, more opportunity to engage the street, and ultimately to have a higher rate of occupancy than a single large user that can leave a dramatic impact on the community if it no longer has a need for the building.

Historic Preservation and Sustainability are essentially achieving two different, but similar, goals while sharing the same objectives. Identifying these objectives and finding common ground will help both initiatives succeed. To find out more about the MPC Historic Preservation Department, please visit our website at [www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org). Please contact Sarah Ward at [wards@thempc.org](mailto:wards@thempc.org) or at 912-651-1484.



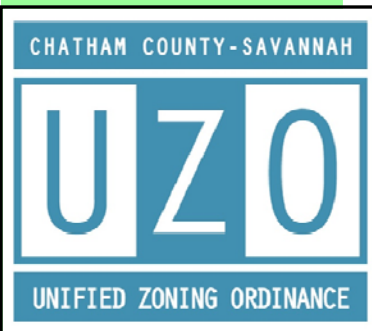
[www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org)

### Did You Know?

The MPC is an open government organization -- Board and staff members are readily available, only a phone call or email away. We maintain up to date contact lists on our website via our [contact page](http://www.thempc.org) (<http://www.thempc.org>) or 912-651-1440

### Please Check Out:

Our innovative website [West Bay - Hudson Hill Study](http://www.westbay-hudsonhillstudy.info) ([www.westbay-hudsonhillstudy.info](http://www.westbay-hudsonhillstudy.info)), which won the 2009 award for Outstanding Planning Process for A Large Community from the [Georgia Planning Association](http://georgiaplanning.org/) (<http://georgiaplanning.org/>)



terns—supported by zoning—often make this impossible.

The UZO acknowledges that practices favored a half-century ago should be reevaluated and updated, where necessary and possible. As resources become more limited, as our population lives longer, and as technology becomes available to change how and where we live, work and transit, zoning must take on a pro-active role rather than a reactive one.

Share your ideas with us on zoning and sustainability. Please visit [www.unifiedzoning.org](http://www.unifiedzoning.org) or join us on Facebook (Chatham County-Savannah Unified Zoning Ordinance). Please contact Charlotte Moore at [moorec@thempc.org](mailto:moorec@thempc.org) or at 912-651-1466.



[www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org)

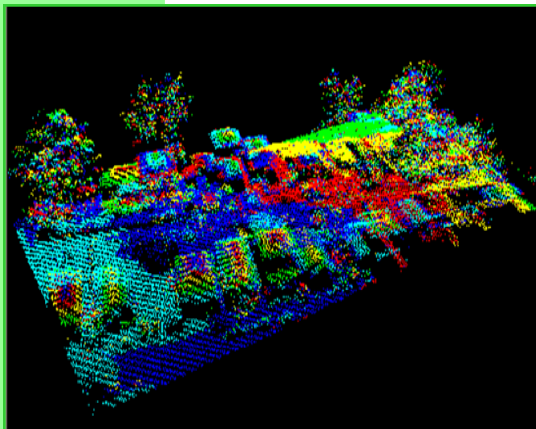
Please visit the MPC Natural Resources on the web at <http://www.mpcnaturalresources.org/> or find us on [Facebook](#).

*The MPC Agency Action Plan will assist the community in understanding Coastal Risks initiatives already completed, those underway, and those we seek to include in our future work programs.*



View of a LIDAR 3-dimensional model of a residential city block.

Each dot represents a laser pulse and each color change represents a one foot shift in elevation. Houses and trees are left in for visual effect.



## Chatham's Roadmap for Adapting to Coastal Risks

*Jackie Jackson Teel  
Natural Resources Administrator*

In 2009, the Georgia Department of Natural Resources Coastal Resources Division contacted MPC to partner for a pilot project centered on helping coastal communities plan for a variety of coastal hazards related to shallow coastal flooding and changing climatic patterns. This was seen as an opportunity to supplement the current planning efforts of the Chatham County Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan.

The resulting *Roadmap for Adapting to Coastal Risks Workshop* was held in March of 2010. The workshop was planned and conducted by a multi-organizational partnership including: Chatham Emergency Management Agency (CEMA), the Chatham Environmental Forum (CEF), Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC), City of Tybee Island, Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO), Georgia Department of Natural Resources

Coastal Resources Division (DNR-CRD), and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Coastal Services Center (NOAA CSS). The final report is currently under review by the workshop steering committee and is scheduled for release in the coming months.

MPC recognizes the role community planning plays in addressing the key issues and drivers developed for this workshop. Findings from the workshop reveal many areas where MPC is currently engaged in planning efforts, as well

as future opportunities for involvement. As a result, we have developed the *MPC Agency Action Plan* to assist the community in understanding initiatives already completed, those underway, and those we seek to include in our future work programs. If you would like additional information please contact Jackie Jackson Teel at 912-651-1440, or at [jacksonj@thempc.org](mailto:jacksonj@thempc.org).

### The E-Agenda

*Roger Beall  
Systems Administrator*

Technological innovation is one of the tools in our arsenal to help preserve our environmental resources. One of our efforts -- the implementation of a common [electronic agenda system](http://www.thempc.org/Administrative/Archive/2010agenda.htm) (<http://www.thempc.org/Administrative/Archive/2010agenda.htm>)

for the 12 boards served by the MPC, resulted in quicker access to rich and detailed information about items to be addressed in upcoming meetings. Board members and the general public are raving about it. This is just one of a series of improvements that we are making in order to realize the goal of a sustainable future.

## Elevation Data and Sustainability

*Jason Lee  
Senior GIS Analyst*

*SAGIS and Chatham County are currently wrapping up a year-long project acquiring high resolution elevation data (LIDAR) for Chatham County.*

The primary appeal of GIS is its ability to accurately represent and thus understand our world. This understanding then facilitates decision making, ensuring that our community's plans can be based on solid evidence, not conjecture. However, these models are only as good as the underlying data that make them.

For example, the flat nature of our coastal area demands elevation data of the highest resolution in order to sufficiently reflect the topography for operational purposes such as flood planning. Here in Chatham County, a few inches difference in elevation makes the difference between wet and dry land.

That is why SAGIS and Chatham County used Special Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST) funds to

purchase the most accurate elevational data available. LIDAR is a technology similar to RADAR, but employs lasers instead of radio waves to measure distances. Approximately seven billion lidar points, accurate to within 4 inches, were shot and acquired for Chatham County. This phenomenal amount of points describes our landscape (see figure to left) with unprecedented detail.

This view of Chatham County will fortunately result in more accurate Hurricane Surge maps, better Flood Insurance Rate Maps, cheaper and quicker engineering studies (such as transportation alternatives) and more. Having these kinds of data at our fingertips is key to building a sustainable, livable future.

# The New SAGIS Internet Viewer



[www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org)

<http://www.sagis.org/>



*Jason Lee  
Senior GIS Analyst*

SAGIS is proud to introduce its new public GIS viewer, which debuted on September 1, 2010.

Our flagship site, [SAGIS.org](http://SAGIS.org), has been efficiently delivering GIS data and solutions to the public and government for over 10 years now. However, it has become time to update the format to more current internet standards and thus take advantage of increasing speed, stability and visual capabilities.

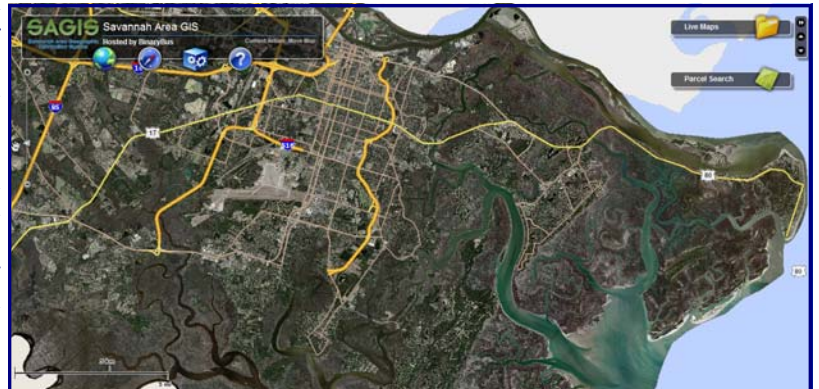
To this end SAGIS worked with our web designer BinaryBus, LTD and re-designed our site to be more visually appealing, quicker and more stable. Although the site is still under construction, we think the result is a greatly improved, more user friendly product that will enable a wider audience to

access the publicly available GIS data we have.

To check it out, go to <http://www.sagis.org/>, where you will see the following dialogue screen:



*SAGIS Intro screen (above) and Viewer (below)*



## Savannah Streetcar Plan

*Mark Wilkes  
Director of Transportation*

Savannah once had a streetcar system connecting downtown with several early suburbs. A rebirth for this transportation mode could reduce residents', as well as tourists', dependence on the automobile and the resulting pressure for parking. Additionally, the streetcar could spur economic development and community revitalization in certain corridors.

The Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO), in partnership with the City of Savannah and the Savannah Area Mobility Management, Inc. (commonly known as Mobility Management Board), has submitted a TIGER II planning grant application to begin the initial steps into the federal planning

process for the Savannah Streetcar Project.

The initial steps include a detailed Alternatives Analysis, including an enhanced technology review, with an expanded public outreach and communication program. The project corridor extends along Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard/Montgomery Street, from River Street south to approximately Gwinnett Street. This corridor has been included in several previous feasibility studies for re-establishing streetcar service. None of the previous studies have moved this effort into the federal planning process. This project is the first step in that process, part of the long-term plan to implement the next phase of streetcar service in Savannah.

The Alternatives Analysis process will refine the limits of the project, identify the appropriate alignment and station locations, compare the

From there, choose the MapIt Flex option, and you will enter the new SAGIS site (below). A User Guide (which will change as we adapt the site to feedback) is available for download there.

Note that the original site is currently coexisting with the newly formatted site until November 30, 2010.

We hope you like it, but welcome any feedback.

For more information, contact Noel Perkins at 912-651-1477 or [perkinsn@thempc.org](mailto:perkinsn@thempc.org).

viability of the streetcar with other modes, and clarify the potential of the project to compete for federal capital construction funds. The project will provide a link to the existing River Street Streetcar service, a demonstration project currently funded by the Mobility Management Board, using hotel fees. In addition, this project will support and enhance other planning and development activities along the corridor. The streetcar will offer timely and direct connections for tourists, residents, and employees to many historic and community activities and jobs along the corridor. From a historical perspective, this project would restore a mode of transportation that operated successfully in years past.

For more information, please contact Mark Wilkes at 912-651-1451 or [wilkesm@thempc.org](mailto:wilkesm@thempc.org)

# CORE MPO's Total Mobility Plan



[www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org)

[www.corempo.org](http://www.corempo.org)

## What is the CORE MPO?

According to federal law, transportation planning processes must be organized and directed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) for all urbanized areas with a population of at least 50,000 as defined by the US Census Bureau. The Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO), serves as the MPO for the Savannah/Chatham County area, and is made up of elected and appointed officials and executives from local, state and federal agencies. Staff support is provided to the CORE MPO and its advisory committees by the MPC.

## Elements of the Total Mobility Plan:

- Transit Mobility Vision Plan
- Detailed Plans for Corridors or Areas
- I-16 Flyover Removal Study
- Savannah Streetcar Plan
- Non-motorized Transportation Plan
- Climate Change Assessment

*Mark Wilkes*  
*Director of Transportation*

The Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) Total Mobility Plan will expand upon the goals and policy framework established by the Framework Mobility Plan, adopted in September 2009, to address the full spectrum of transportation options and address the growing concerns of livability and sustainability in our community. A key feature of the Total Mobility Plan will be the incorporation of detailed plans for corridors and subareas. These detailed plans will complete the Transportation Amenities planning process begun in 2003 by providing specific concepts for planned road projects which address context



sensitive design and complete streets principles in concert with adjacent land uses. In addition to corridor and area plans, the Total Mobility Plan will incorporate the recommendations of a number of key planning studies currently underway including: Transit Mobility Vision Plan, Streetcar Plan, Non-Motorized Transportation Plan, Climate Change Assessment, I-16 Flyover Removal Study, SR 21 Corridor Study, SR 204 Corridor Study and US 80 Bridge Replacement Study.

Opportunities to be involved in the development of the Total Mobility Plan will kick off with a transportation summit to be held in the fall of 2010. Specific dates, times, and

location will be announced and advertised through several channels.

*Elements of the Total Mobility Plan (detailed in the following articles):*

- Transit Mobility Vision Plan
- Detailed Plans for Corridors or Areas
- I-16 Flyover Removal Study
- Savannah Streetcar Plan
- Non-motorized Transportation Plan
- Climate Change Assessment

For more information, questions, or comments, please contact Mark Wilkes at 912-651-1451 or [wilkesm@thempc.org](mailto:wilkesm@thempc.org)

## Transit Mobility Vision Plan

*Michael Adams*  
*Transportation Planner*

The Transit Mobility Vision Plan is a regional master plan that encompasses five (5) counties in Georgia (Chatham, Bryan, Liberty, Effingham, and Bulloch counties) and two (2) counties in South Carolina (Beaufort and Jasper counties). The plan is a

high-level study that is looking at all modes of transit to determine what modes are feasible, where those modes should be located and when those modes should be implemented in relation to the CORE MPO's 2035 Total Mobility Plan.

The first steps of the Transit Mobility Vision plan were data collection and key stakeholder interviews, both of which were con-

ducted during December 2009 and January 2010. A committee of stakeholders is providing information and feedback throughout the process.

For more information, questions, or comments, please contact Michael Adams at 912-651-1458 or [adamsm@thempc.org](mailto:adamsm@thempc.org)

## Detailed Plans for Corridors or Areas

*Jane Love*  
*Transportation Planner*

The CORE MPO recognizes that Chatham County communities are concerned not just about the function of transportation projects, but also about the form of the projects and their impacts on the area's assets. Detailed plans for corridors or areas will become part of the Total Mobility Plan to incor-

porate Context Sensitive Design and the Complete Streets policy early in the development of future transportation projects. These plans will help achieve integration of land use and transportation and help gain community support for projects.

The MPO's efforts to protect scenic, historic, and canopied corridors began in 2003, when the MPO staff initiated the Transpor-

tation Amenities Plan.

The next step was development of the Context Sensitive Design manual during 2006 and 2007 to guide implementation. More recently, the MPO included in the adopted Framework Mobility Plan a policy to "ensure that context sensitive design and all Complete Streets elements are

*Continued on page 9*

# I-16 Flyover Removal

Ellen Harris  
Preservation Planner

In the fall of 2009 the MPC, in partnership with the City of Savannah, Chatham County, Savannah Development and Renewal Authority (SDRA), and the CORE MPO, launched an ambitious study to examine the feasibility of removing the I-16 exit ramps at MLK Jr. Blvd. and Montgomery Street, while incorporating the concepts of livability and sustainability.

The overarching goal of the project is to develop a plan to restore this area as a vibrant, thriving community reflective of the dynamic communities of Currietown and Frogtown which the introduction of the flyover in the 1960s fractured. The study will develop scenarios to re-knit this disconnected area back to both the downtown as well as to neighborhoods to the west through street connectivity and small block patterns. Proposed land use patterns include retail, mixed-use corridors along

MLK Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street; residential mixed-income neighborhoods; green-space; and space for civic buildings. Residents and visitors will enjoy a walk-able community with

multiple transportation options facilitated through streets designed for multiple users, not just automobiles, with sidewalks and bicycle lanes and laying the groundwork for a streetcar in the future.

The study includes a substantial public participation component. The first public charrette for the study was held February 17-19, 2010 and was a resounding success. With over 250 participants, the development of a vision for the area and exchange of ideas provided the framework to develop and refine three scenarios for the area. The next public meeting to review and provide feedback and comments on the proposed designs will be an open house on October 12, 2-7 p.m. at the Con-Ed Center (714 MLK Blvd). Please visit our website for additional information. If you have questions, comments or would like to get more involved, please contact Ellen Harris, Project Manager, at [harrise@thempc.org](mailto:harrise@thempc.org) or (912) 651-1482.

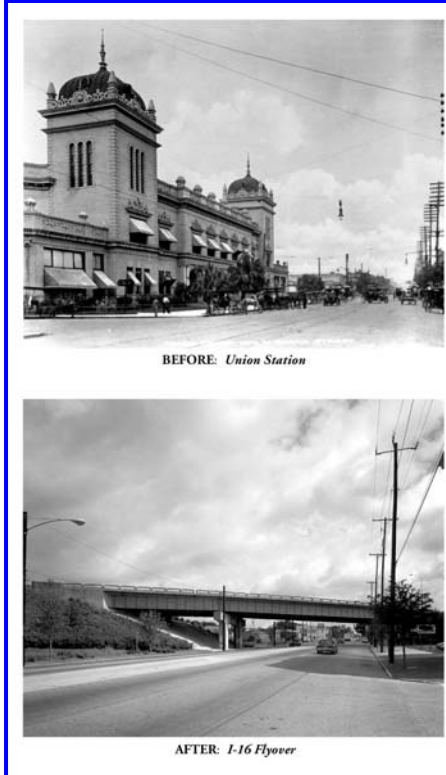
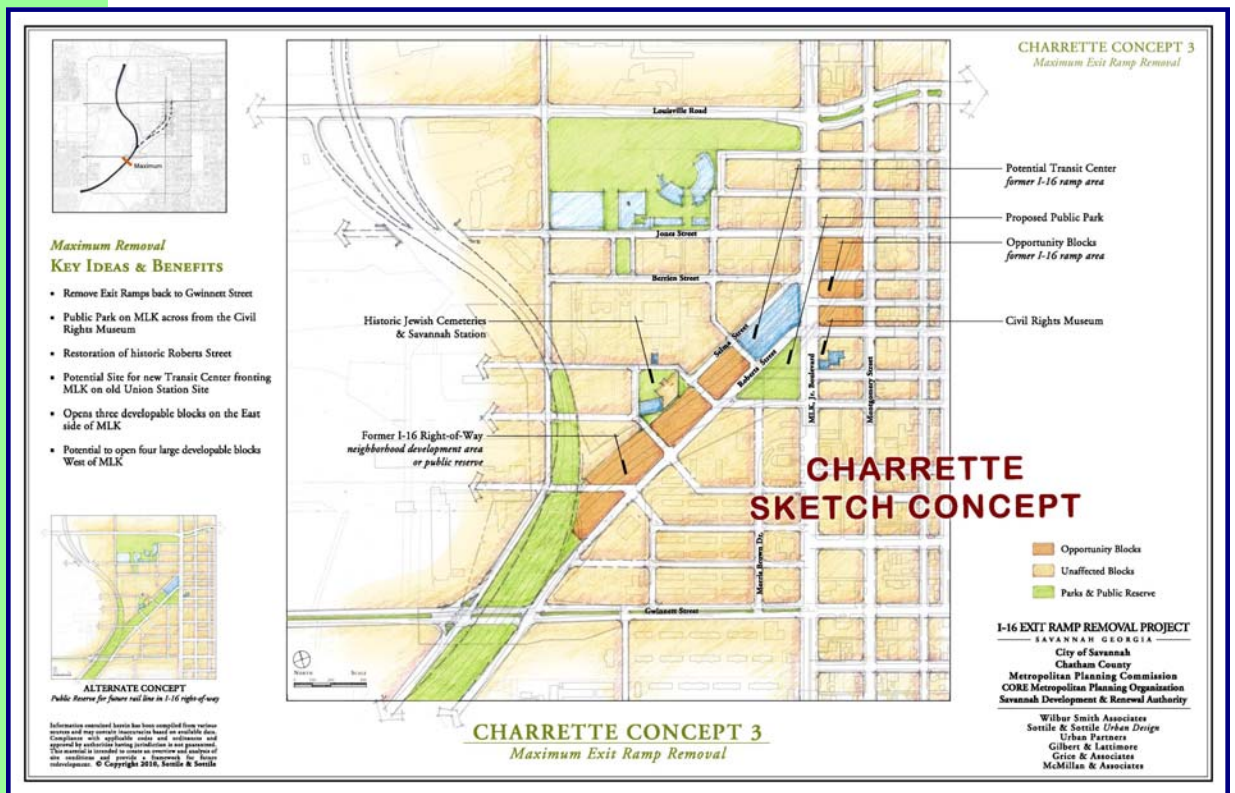


Photo courtesy of SDRA



[www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org)

[www.corempo.org](http://www.corempo.org)





**Chairman Coleman Elected to APA Directorship**



W. Shedrick Coleman, chairman of the Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission, was elected to the position of Director at Large during the recent national elections of the American Planning Association (APA). Members of the APA selected Mr. Coleman from a ballot of talented professionals from around the country.

As Director at Large, Mr. Coleman will represent commissioners and elected officials while serving as one of the 13-members on the APA Board of Directors, governing the association and setting strategic goals. Coleman will serve for four years in this volunteer position.

Coleman is a partner at the Cowart Coleman Group that practices architecture, land planning and interior design. He is a licensed architect in the state of Georgia and has more than 20 years of experience in the architecture and planning professions.

# Non-motorized Transportation Plan

Jane Love  
Transportation Planner

Non-motorized transportation includes walking or using a wheelchair, bicycling, skating, and using pedicabs. The Non-motorized Transportation Plan will serve as an update to the MPO's Bikeway Plan of 2000 and as well as providing a plan now to address the needs of pedestrians, and other self-powered travelers. The Plan will be developed by:

*Identifying needed improvements for the non-motorized modes;*

*Identifying areas for amenities to help create a human-scaled environment that encourages use of physically active modes;*

*Prioritizing improvements and*

*identifying funding opportunities*

The resulting prioritized lists will guide the MPO in programming for non-motorized transportation over 25 years in the Framework Mobility Plan and will be incorporated into the Total Mobility Plan. The lists can also guide local governments in the development of Capital Improvement Programs, and guide future organizations applying for grants under such programs as Transportation Enhancement and Safe Routes to School.

**How to get involved:**

*Tell us about the problem areas or your preferred routes and frequent destinations.* <http://www.thempc.org/Transportation/Non-motorTranspPlan.html>

*Take the online survey for bicy-*

*clists and/or pedestrians:* <http://www.thempc.org/Transportation/Non-motorTranspPlan.html>

*Also visit* <http://www.thempc.org/documents/Transportation/Calendars/2010%20CORE%20MPO%20Committee%20Meeting%20Schedule.pdf>

*for future public meetings and feedback opportunities.*

For more information, questions, or comments, please contact or visit us on the web <http://www.thempc.org/Transportation/Non-motorTranspPlan.html>

Please contact Jane Love at 912-651-1443 or [lovej@thempc.org](mailto:lovej@thempc.org)



## Climate Change Assessment

Mark Wilkes  
Director of Transportation

The Climate Change Assessment will examine ways in which the Total Mobility Plan can best reduce greenhouse gas emissions



Tidal creek in Chatham County

and adapt infrastructure needs to the changing climate.

This Assessment will include background information on the link between our transportation system and climate change, a thorough review of scientific and academic climate policy guidance for transportation planning, and an evaluation system consistent with the performance measures of the Total Mobility Plan to guide the development of future

projects.

For more information, questions, or comments, please contact Mark Wilkes at 912-651-1451 or [wilkesm@thempc.org](mailto:wilkesm@thempc.org)

*Corridors; Continued from page 7*

an integral part of the design process for all non-interstate Highway projects."

For more information, questions, or comments, please contact Mark Wilkes at 912-651-1451 or [wilkesm@thempc.org](mailto:wilkesm@thempc.org)

# CORE MPO Corridor Studies



[www.thempc.org](http://www.thempc.org)



*The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act*

To get more information on the CORE MPO Corridor Studies got to [www.corempo.org](http://www.corempo.org) or call 912-651-1440

Mark Wilkes  
Director of Transportation

Three corridor studies, funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, are currently under way at CORE MPO aim to solve traffic congestion, reduce accidents and improve pedestrian and bicycle access for some key routes in Chatham County.



## US 80 Bridges Study Objectives

US 80 is the only transportation corridor that connects Tybee Island to the Savannah mainland. The study is to determine the feasibility of:

- Replacing or modifying the existing bridges to accommodate wider lanes and shoulder,
- Constructing bicycle and pedestrian facilities that link to Tybee Island and McQueen's Island Trail,
- Providing additional capacity at specific locations to provide congestion or incident relief,
- Improving conditions of flood prone areas.



## SR 204 Study Objectives

The SR 204 corridor is the key arterial connection across the southern part of Chatham County. The corridor links Truman Parkway and Veterans Parkway to US 17 and I-95. It is a primary commuter route and strategic route for access to the Hunter Army Airfield Rio Road gate.

The study will look to improve capacity along the corridor, reduce congestion, and improve safety while maintaining the character and cohesion of the community. This study will:

- Develop a viable and constructible alternative that improves mobility along the corridor and meets the needs of the community.
- Obtain community input to develop and evaluate the alternatives to define a preferred alternative supported by the community.
- Identify a fiscally feasible funding plan for the construction and operation of the preferred alternative.
- Coordinate with and obtain support from the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).



## SR 21 Study Objectives

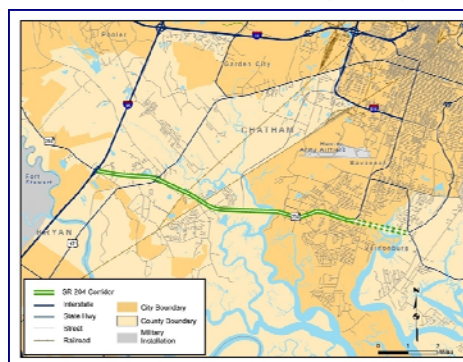
The SR 21 corridor is a key thoroughfare in Chatham County that serves commuter traffic between Effingham County and Savannah and provides a primary means of access to major industries and the Port of Savannah.

The purpose of this study is to accommodate future travel demand, reduce delay, enhance mobility, and provide safer travel along SR 21 by:

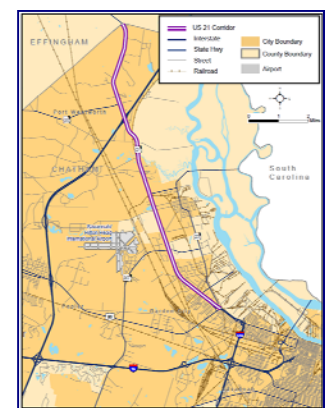
- Improving operational levels of service during peak periods
- Separating trucks from passenger cars to the greatest extent possible
- Improving connectivity with major roadways, both existing and planned,
- Improving access to both Georgia Ports Authority terminals,
- Minimizing environmental impacts
- Maintaining or improving access to existing businesses and industries,
- Minimizing impacts to the communities of Garden City and Port Wentworth,
- Accommodating future development/redevelopment by considering land use impacts.



Map of US 80 Extent



Map of SR 204 Extent



Map of SR 21 Extent