



**COASTAL REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
JUNE 2009 MPO MEETINGS**

**CORE BOARD and TCC AGENDA ITEM III-C-3
CAC and ACAT AGENDA ITEM II-C-3**

Agenda Item: Requested Amendment to the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan for addition of Interstate 3 from Savannah to Knoxville in the unfunded, illustrative project listing

Presenter: Jane Love, MPO staff

Summary: The Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act – a Legacy for Users included \$1,320,000 for a feasibility study that the US Department of Transportation would conduct of a potential interstate highway between Savannah and Knoxville, by way of Augusta. The legislation uses the term “3rd Infantry Division Highway.” Many people refer to the corridor as “Interstate 3”; however, this term is unofficial, because it has not been constructed and designated as an interstate.

Description of the Study

FHWA will study at minimum the items noted in the legislation, i.e., the cost of construction and the steps needed to construct highways in both corridors. Determining a cost estimate will require some identification of such factors as alternative locations, the geographic and environmental impacts that will have to be addressed as well as, for example, land costs.

The route of the potential I-3 has not been determined, as that would be part of the study. Discussion that circulated at the time of the bill’s submission indicated that in several places the route may use the alignments of some existing non-interstate highways. The attached map shows the route derived from information formerly published on then-Congressman Charlie Norwood’s website. This is not necessarily the route that will be recommended in the study. Also, the study will not make a recommendation in favor of or against construction. FHWA states that that is the province of state, regional, and local government officials.

The Georgia Department of Transportation included the I-3 study in its request for amendments to the MPO's FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) in February, 2009. In April, MPO staff requested and received CORE Board authorization to begin the process of amending the corridor into the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), to allow valid inclusion of the study in the FY 2008-2011 TIP.

SAFETEA-LU provides money for the feasibility study only, not for construction of an interstate project. There is no certainty, at this time, that an interstate would be built. Because no funds are identified for building the project, this proposed LRTP amendment would only add the project to the list of unfunded projects in the plan.

Recommendation: For endorsement and approval to amend the I-3 proposal into the illustrative project listing of the 2030 LRTP, in order to allow the federal study to proceed.



Source: www.chattoogariver.org. Possible corridor route based on information formerly published on former Congressman Charlie Norwood's website. ROUTE ALTERNATIVES REMAIN TO BE STUDIED. CONSTRUCTION OF THE INTERSTATE IS NOT CERTAIN.