



ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, June 18, 2008
The Georgia Infirmary

2:00 p.m.
1900 Abercorn St.

<u>Members</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Teresa Brenner	Savannah Council of the Blind	x
William K. Broker	Georgia Legal Service	
Wayne Dawson	Savannah-Chatham County Fair Housing Council	
Jan Elders	Savannah-Chatham Council on Disability Issues	x
Jeff Felser	City of Savannah	x
Yolonda Fontaine	Housing Authority of Savannah	x
William Gardner	National Federation of the Blind	x
Bob Habas	Living Independence for Everyone Inc. (LIFE)	
Timamu Hakim	Chatham Area Transit Authority	
Zoe Hardenbrook	GDOT District 5	
Carol Hunt	NAACP-Savannah Branch	
Hunter Hurst	Georgia Infirmary Day Center For Rehabilitation	
McArthur Jarrett	Interested Citizen	x
Robert Kozlowski	Kicklighter Resource Center	
Tom Lamar	Interested Citizen	
Jane Love	Metropolitan Planning Commission	x
Patti Lyons	Senior Citizens Savannah -Chatham Inc.	
C. J. McCampbel	Laidlaw/Teleride	
Laurie Monroe	Economic Opportunity Authority	
Bill Oakley	Goodwill Industries	
Greg Schroeder	United Way of the Coastal Empire	

Clealice Timmons	Coastal Center for Development Services	
Staff Representative	Chatham County	
Terri White	Savannah Assn for the Blind	x
<u>Voting Alternates</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Kenneth Martin	Living Independence for Everyone Inc. (LIFE)	x
Jean Iaderosa	Chatham Area Transit	x
<u>Others Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Pete Liakakis	Chatham County	x
Kim Harrison	Consumer Advocates	x
Tyrone Palmer	National Federation of the Blind	x
Barbara Setzso	for the MPO	x
Beth Thulin	Chatham Area Transit	x
Randy Weitman	GA Ports Authority	x

Call to Order

Chairman McArthur Jarrett called the June 18, 2008 Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation meeting to order followed by self-introductions of those in attendance.

I. Approval of Agenda

Ms. Jane Love read the revised agenda. It was moved and seconded to approve the revised agenda. The motion to approve the revised agenda carried with none opposed.

II. Action Items

A. Approval of the April 16, 2008 Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation Meeting Minutes.

Ms. Barbara Settzo read the minutes from the April 16, 2008 meeting at Mr. Jarrett's request. Mr. Jarrett offered a correction to Status Report, Item B. He noted that he had not personally attended the meeting with Commissioner Gena Abraham but was reporting to ACAT on behalf of those who had met with the Commissioner. It was then moved and seconded to approve the April 16, 2008 Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation Meeting Minutes, as corrected.

ACAT Action: the motion to approve the April 16, 2008 Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation Meeting Minutes, as corrected carried with none opposed.

**B. Requested amendment to the 2030 Long Range
Transportation Plan for Georgia Ports Authority/Norfolk
Southern Project**

Ms. Love explained to the committee that at today's meeting the committee is being asked to endorse further study on the proposed amendment. It is not endorsing the project itself at this time.

Mr. Randy Weitman, Manager of Engineering Services for the Georgia Ports Authority, presented the amendment request. This is the first railroad project he can recall in the past eight years to come before the MPO. This project involves changing the route that the trains use to service the port by constructing a "wye" connection which allows more direct access. Because this route change would greatly benefit the port, the port has agreed to give \$1.5 million of their \$5 million in earmarked funds to the Norfolk Southern railroad for this project. Norfolk Southern will fund the remainder of the \$7 million in total construction costs. The laying of only 1,700 new feet of rail track in West Chatham will cut the train travel distance by 25% and eliminate train crossings at 21 street crossings. Mr. Weitman recited the street crossings in Garden City, Port Wentworth, Savannah, and in unincorporated Chatham County that would be positively impacted by this change. This route change affects the intermodal train traffic, which are the longer trains. It will not eliminate all railroad traffic from

the existing route and street crossings, but it will reduce it significantly. It is estimated that the route change will save a daily average seven hours of delay for road traffic. Mr. Weitman reported that permitting is almost complete. He expects work to begin in the fall (September or November), should the Plan amendment be passed.

Mr. Jarrett asked if the street crossings involved were also pedestrian crossings. Mr. Weitman was not sure how many crossings involved pedestrian crossings but believed some crossings in Garden City and the crossing near the school would likely involve pedestrian crossings.

Mr. Weitman noted that the preliminary engineering is being paid for by Norfolk Southern and is almost complete. He also reported that funds for this project are earmarked so the project will not have any adverse effect on any other projects already in the Plan.

Ms. Love explained that this amendment process is a 2-step process. The first step is to endorse further study which is what staff recommends today. Then there will be a public comment period and the CUTS committees will vote on the actual project at the August meeting.

It was moved and seconded to endorse further study of the Georgia Ports Authority/Norfolk Southern project for possible inclusion in the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan.

ACAT Action: the motion to endorse further study of the Georgia Ports Authority/Norfolk Southern project for possible inclusion in the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan carried with none opposed.

C. Amendments to the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

- **Action on amendment to Transit Section**
- **Action on amendment for Hutchinson Island Projects**

- **Action on amendment for additional planning (L230) funds (P.I. 0008964)**

Ms. Beth Thulin, the new Financial Director for Chatham Area Transit, explained the requested amendment to the Transit Section of the FY 2008-2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) so that Chatham Area Transit could access earmarked funds and grant money that had previously been awarded but not included in the TIP. This is a “housekeeping” request to get things back in order. This will not impact any other projects. The funds are specifically for capital improvements, operations assistance, the “Job Access Reverse Commute” program and the “New Freedom” program. It was moved and seconded to endorse the amendment to the Transit Section of the FY 2008-2011 TIP

ACAT Action: the motion to endorse the amendment to the Transit Section of the FY 2008-2011 TIP carried with none opposed.

Ms. Love explained the requested amendment to the FY 2008-2011 TIP to include earmarked funds from Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for the Hutchinson Island Parcel 7/Slip 3 Riverwalk and for the Water Ferry Riverwalk Intemodal facility. Ms. Love reported that staff has confirmed that these two projects are consistent with the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan. Staff recommends endorsement of the amendment.

The Riverwalk project on Parcel 7/Slip 3 is on Hutchinson Island in an area of industrial character currently. Future development will be urban style so sidewalks are appropriate.

The second project includes suitable shelter, bus-jitney loiter area and riverwalk access, and passenger docks for the Water Ferry-Riverwalk Passenger Intermodal Facility.

These funds are earmarked so no other projects would adversely affected by amending this project to the TIP.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the amendment to the FY 2008-2011 TIP to include earmarked funding for the two Hutchinson Island Projects (Parcel 7/Slip 3 Riverwalk and Water Ferry-Riverwalk Intermodal Facility).

ACAT Action: the motion to endorse the amendment to the FY 2008-2011 TIP to include earmarked funding for the two Hutchinson Island Projects (Parcel 7/Slip 3 Riverwalk and Water Ferry-Riverwalk Intermodal Facility) carried with none opposed.

Ms. Love explained the requested amendment to the TIP requesting additional planning funds of \$125,000 to be used for the Savannah MPO Strategic Planning Study.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the amendment to the FY 2008-2011 TIP for additional planning (L230) funds (P.I. 0008964).

ACAT Action: the motion to endorse the amendment to the FY 2008-2011 TIP for additional planning (L230) funds (P.I. 0008964) carried with none opposed.

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

Ms. Love reported that the funds that were just endorsed for the MPO Strategic Planning study for inclusion in the FY 2008-2011 TIP now need to be shown in the FY 2009 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

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.

ACAT 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 CUTS/MPO Project Prioritization for input into GDOT's Project Prioritization report to the Commissioner

The intent of this prioritization exercise is to emphasize our priority projects that are ready for construction, for consideration with the state-wide Project Prioritization report. Ms. Love reported that the MPO staff had met with district representatives of GDOT and county and city staff the previous week to review projects that have priority in Savannah/Chatham County. Staff reviewed several projects in terms of readiness and funding. Because MPO staff received some updated information at the meeting with other staffs last week, a final report is not ready today. A final report will be ready for the Policy Committee next week. Since this report today is not finalized, Ms. Love recommended that this committee take no action but rather treat this as a status report.

III. Status Reports

A. Teleride Handbook Update: Report from Sub-committee

Mr. Jarrett reported for the sub-committee due to Mr. Oakley's absence. Also, Mr. McCampbel could not be here today because he needed to address problems with the Teleride vehicles this week. At this time the revised draft is not ready, although the subcommittee has concluded its review. The committee has met twice. He believes the new handbook will meet the needs of the service customers. He said the draft handbook will be available in August. After review by ACAT, the new handbooks will be distributed in the vans and other locations around town and on the CAT website. There will be large-print editions and possibly Braille editions.

Ms. Jean Iaderosa, from CAT, reported that Teleride customers' ID card may be useful in securing para-transit service in other cities.

B. Bicycle Policies and Design Guidance

Ms. Love reported on bicycle policies and design in response to questions raised at the April CUTS meetings. She noted that GDOT's policy states that the Department will accommodate bicycling improvements into all widening and reconstruction projects when there is an existing bikeway or if the project is on a designated bike route.

Ms. Love also referenced the accommodation policies from the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials (AASHTO), South Carolina Department of Transportation resolution from 2003, and the CUTS/MPO Chatham County Bikeway Plan adopted in 2000. These policies recommend a broader level of accommodation, compared to GDOT's policy. Ms. Love noted that GDOT does follow AASHTO guidelines in designing the bikeways.

Mr. Jarrett expressed concern about bicycle racks that block sidewalks.

C. Proposed Lazaretto Creek Bridge Bikeway cross-section & examples of alternatives

Ms. Love explained that this status report is in response to CUTS committee questions about bike lanes with barriers. Her report showed three possible solutions: 1) GDOT's proposed cross-section which includes a ten-foot bike-able shoulder; 2) a bikeway beyond a barrier and the ten-foot shoulder for motorists, and a separately constructed bicycle-pedestrian bridge. A stand-alone bridge for bicycles and/or pedestrians would not be built by GDOT since they believe the state constitution prohibits using the motor fuel tax

revenue on off-road projects. Such a project could be funded through the Transportation Enhancement Program.

D. Gwinnett Street Widening Project

Ms. Love explained that the widening of Gwinnett Street between I-16 and Stiles Avenue is to improve connectivity and to address the flooding issues. The City is managing the project.

IV. Agency Reports

A. First Transit/Teleride

There was no report at this time.

Ms. Jan Elders asked if it was true that scheduling a ride should be done one week in advance. Mr. Jarrett responded that at one time it was true, but no longer. There could be changes to this due to the new software and difficulties with equipment.

Mr. Jarrett sees Teleride service as an on-going concern. He hopes that the changes in the new handbook will assist the consumer. Mr. Jarrett told the committee that Mr. McCampbell of Teleride is very responsive and is making every effort to improve the service. He encouraged consumers to use the complaint line. If they find Teleride unresponsive, they should call CAT. The Teleride complaint line is 651-6000.

Mr. Jarrett commented that many of the problems found with Teleride are systemic to the para-transit business in general. Other communities with larger systems are much worse.

B. Chatham Area Transit

Ms. Iaderosa reported that the "Dump the Pump" campaign has the active support of the City and the County. She also reminded the

committee that a public meeting for the Environmental Assessment for the Proposed Transit Center Site will be held on June 26, 2008 at 5:00 PM at the County Commissioner's meeting room on Bull Street, 2nd floor. The full report may be found on the CAT website – www.catchacat.org.

V. Other Business

There was no other business at this time.

VI. Other Business

Ms. Terri White will be the new representative for the Savannah Association for the Blind, and Ms. Teresa Brenner will be replacing Brian Leighton as representative for Savannah Council of the Blind.

Elections for ACAT Chair and Vice-Chair will be held at the August meeting.

VII. Public Participation Opportunities

There was no public participation at this time.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the Committee, the June 18, 2008 ACAT Committee Meeting adjourned. The next meeting will be August 20, 2008 at 2:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Love
Transportation Planner