



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON ACCESSIBLE TRANSPORTATION
MEETING SUMMARY**

Monday, December 14, 2009

1:00 p.m.

MPC Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room

112 E. State St.

<u>Members</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
James Aberson	Chatham County	x
Teresa Brenner	Savannah Council of the Blind	x
William K. Broker	Georgia Legal Service	
Wayne Dawson	Savannah-Chatham County Fair Housing Council	x
Jan Elders	Savannah-Chatham Council on Disability Issues	
Jeff Felser	City of Savannah	
Yolonda Fontaine	Housing Authority of Savannah	
William Gardner	National Federation of the Blind	x
Bob Habas	Living Independence for Everyone Inc. (LIFE)	x
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	x

Greg Schroeder	United Way of the Coastal Empire
Clealice Timmons	Coastal Center for Development Services
Terri White	Savannah Assn for the Blind

<u>Voting Alternates</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
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<u>Others Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Ava Ancrum	Savannah Assn for the Blind	x
Eric Curl	Savannah Morning News	x
Jack Lewis	Interested citizen	x
Tyrone Palmer	National Federation of the Blind	x
Barbara Setzto	for the MPO	x

Call to Order

Chairman McArthur Jarrett called the December 14, 2009 Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation meeting to order followed by self-introductions by those in attendance.

I. Approval of Agenda

Following the reading of the agenda it was moved and seconded to accept the agenda as presented.

ACAT Action: the motion to accept the agenda as presented carried with none opposed.

II. Action Items

A. Endorsement of the 2010 CORE MPO Meeting Schedule

Mr. Bill Oakley reported that this proposed schedule of ACAT meetings is consistent with the current schedule. It was moved and

seconded to endorse the 2010 CORE MPO Meeting Schedule as presented.

ACAT Action: the motion to endorse the 2010 CORE MPO Meeting Schedule as presented carried with none opposed.

III. Status Reports

A. Project DeRenne Update

Ms. Love presented an update on Project DeRenne based on what was shared by city officials at the Technical Coordinating Meeting last week. Two alternatives that will be presented to city council in February came out of the recent charrette for Project DeRenne. One alternative is for intersection improvements that would include an additional east-bound lane on DeRenne Ave. that terminates as a right-turn lane at White Bluff Rd. Pedestrian refuge islands at intersections are also proposed. This alternative would offer only a partial solution to the traffic problem. A different, preferred alternative, called the “Boulevard” option, directly addresses the main problem of heavy traffic from I-516 using DeRenne Ave. to get to points south via White Bluff Rd. and Abercorn St. and vice versa. To address this travel demand, they propose creating a flyover from I-516 directly to Hunter Army Airfield and Hampstead Ave. Also proposed is a realignment of Hampstead Ave. at White Bluff Rd., which would provide a curve onto the southern portion of White Bluff Rd. in place of the “T” intersection that exists now. White Bluff Rd., north of Hampstead Ave., would come to a “T” intersection at the new curve, and south-bound travelers there would make a left at a light to continue south. Hampstead Ave. would be widened to a 4-lane boulevard with sidewalks on each side and a planted median down the middle.

There was further discussion concerning the specific improvements to Hampstead. Ms. Teresa Brenner asked if all new traffic signal installations in this area would automatically be installed as audible

signals. Ms. Love indicated that the plan had not progressed to that level of detail. Mr. Jarrett asked if there was a written policy that audible signals would be standard at all new intersections. Mr. Oakely recommended that this committee write a courtesy letter concerning the subject of audible signals and the importance of such to the residents of this neighborhood. Ms. Love indicated that such a letter would be appropriate after the city council shows support of one of the general concepts. The letter will be sent to City Manager Michael Brown with a copy to Project DeRenne coordinator, Susan Broker and will be signed by Mr. McArthur Jarrett, representing ACAT.

Ms. Brenner also requested that pedestrian crossings be considered as they plan for right-turn lanes.

IV. Agency Reports

A. First Transit/Teleride

Since there was no representative from First Transit/Teleride, Mr. Jarrett asked Mr. Oakley, as a CAT board member, to share any information that may be of interest to this committee. Mr. Oakley reported that the CAT Board is in the process of approving Veolia as a private partner to assume full responsibility for the operation of the CAT system. This agreement will include Veolia assuming management of Teleride, as a part of CAT. Part of the long-term agreement calls for Veolia's infusion of a minimum of \$500,000 into the transit system after the first five years. There are presently on order six new Teleride vans with expected delivery in mid-February. Mr. James Aberson reported that Veolia is hoping to acquire nine or ten vans for Teleride from Veolia's operation in Detroit. Mr. Oakley reported that Teleride ridership has been increasing with a decrease in expended mileage. This indicates a better and more effective use of the new scheduling software.

Mr. Wayne Dawson reported that Veolia has software that will be installed which can notify riders when the next bus is expected.

There was a discussion about the FTA's requirements for ADA-qualified riders and the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from fixed route limit for service. Currently, Teleride is using the Coastal Regional Coaches to serve those riders outside of the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile service area. Mr. Jarrett believes that the consumers do not clearly understand the rules. Mr. Oakley confirmed that the point of origination and point of destination must both be within the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile service area to be in the priority service area. If either point is outside of the $\frac{3}{4}$ mile, Teleride may deny service. Mr. Aberson noted that Teleride will schedule trips using the Coastal Regional Coaches if an ADA qualified rider is on the Teleride database.

Mr. Aberson reported that he learned from the FTA audit that a Teleride trip that originates and ends within the area covered by the DOT free bus service must also be free. He also noted that discrepancies were found between the website and the Teleride handbook, such as the fare change. The website was correct and the handbook was wrong. Ms. Love commented that CAT should be able to update information like without having another handbook approval by this committee.

B. Chatham Area Transit

Ms. Love read the email report from Mr. Hakim. Two new buses for the fixed route service should be arriving this week. Four new shelters will be in place by end of month, at the following locations:

- Abercorn/Largo – previously not ADA accessible; now with two curb cuts and ramp
- ACL Blvd/Westlake Ave
- Al Henderson Blvd/Red Roof Inn
- Abercorn/Montgomery Cross Rd. (Pep Boys) will be installed this month

His report concluded by noting a 5% increase in fixed route ridership from this time last year.

V. Other Business

Mr. Jack Lewis asked if there was some way for audibly informing the rider that the bus pass was nearing the end of its credit. It was suggested that some tones could ring upon scanning that would indicate the card is near empty. Announcement of exact value remaining should be avoided. Mr. Oakley will investigate possibilities.

Ms. Brenner reported difficulties with buses arriving at the designated stop too early, specifically on Wilmington Island. She also reported that often a 90-minute window on free transfers is not adequate due to scheduling of the buses. Mr. Oakley confirmed that Mr. Odimgbe sees punctuality as a key element to improving performance.

Mr. Aberson attended a meeting for ADA Coordinators and offered suggestions he heard at the meeting to this committee. Suggestions included a flip booklet with each bus route on a card which the vision-impaired could use to communicate with approaching bus drivers. Another option is a card with your stop printed on it that you hand to the bus driver instead of saying your stop aloud. Mr. Jarrett noted that the National Federation of the Blind opposes any public signage about individual's destinations, for safety reasons. Other committee members mentioned that these ideas had been tried in the past and since given up for various reasons. If used properly, the voice-activated announcement of upcoming stops should be sufficient.

VI. Public Participation Opportunities

Mr. Tyrone Palmer asked when CAT closes on Sunday evenings and requested that Teleride operate for as long as CAT operates. Mr. Aberson noted that Teleride was only obligated to operate the same hours along the fixed route that is operating.

Ms. Brenner announced to the committee that she is resigning from ACAT and her post as Vice Chair because she will be living out of

town for about a year. Ms. Brenner also announced that Kim Harrison will be representing Savannah Council of the Blind at ACAT meetings in her place.

VII. **Adjournment**

There being no other business to come before the Committee, the December 14, 2009 ACAT Committee Meeting adjourned. The next meeting will be Monday, February 22, 2010 at the MPC Hearing Room at 1:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Love
Transportation Planner