



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
MEETING SUMMARY**

**Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room  
112 East State Street**

April 17, 2014

5:00 p.m.

<b><u>Members</u></b>	<b><u>Representing</u></b>	<b><u>Present</u></b>
Tony Abbott	Chatham County	x
Daniel Brantley	Chatham County	x
John Chapman	City of Savannah	x
Gerald Cook	City of Bloomingdale	
Philip Cooper	Chatham County	
Mark Egan	Chatham County	x
John Getty	City of Tybee Island	
Phyllis Hardeman	Town of Thunderbolt	
Elizabeth Hilliard	City of Savannah	
Paula Kreissler	City of Savannah	x
Larry Longo	City of Port Wentworth	
Helen McCracken	Town of Thunderbolt	
Christopher Middleton	City of Savannah	
Larry Miles	City of Savannah	x
Patrick J. O'Brien, Jr.	City of Savannah	
Harris Odell	Chatham County	
Deborah Rauers	City of Savannah	
Linda M. Smith	City of Port Wentworth	
Joe Steffen	Chatham County	
Dale Thorpe	Chatham County	
Robert Tully	Chatham County	x
Vacant	City of Bloomingdale	
Vacant	Chatham County	
Vacant	City of Garden City	
Vacant	City of Garden City	
Vacant	City of Pooler	
Vacant	City of Pooler	
Vacant	City of Tybee Island	
Vacant	Town of Vernonburg	
Vacant	Town of Vernonburg	

**Others Present**

**Representing**

Michael Adams	MPO	X
Beverly Davis	RS&H	X
George Fidler	Savannah Airport Commission	X
Jessica Hagan	MPO	X
Jane Love	MPO	X
Barbara Settzo	for MPO	X
Tom Thomson	MPC Executive Director	X
Wykoda Wang	MPO	X
Mark Wilkes	MPO Transportation Director	X
Julie Yawn	MPO	X

Chairman Mark Egan called the meeting to order.

**I. Approval of Agenda**

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda as presented.

**CAC Action: the motion to approve the agenda carried with none opposed.**

**II. Action Items**

**A. Approval of February 20, 2014 meeting minutes**

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2014 meeting.

**CAC Action: the motion to approve the minutes of the February 20, 2014 meeting carried with none opposed.**

**B. Endorsement of the FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program**

Ms. Jane Love presented the staff report and request for endorsement on behalf of Mr. Wilkes, who was still involved in the TCC meeting. The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the list of activities and the budget for the next fiscal year. The general outline of the UPWP is consistent from year to year and among the MPOs within Georgia. She reviewed the major sections of the plan – Administrative, Public Involvement, Data Collection, System Planning, and Summary Budget Table. Ms. Love highlighted two new studies – Road Diet Feasibility Study and Victory Drive Corridor Study.

It was moved and seconded to endorse the FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program.

**CAC Action: the motion to endorse the FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program carried with none opposed.**

### C. FY 2014-2017 TIP Amendments

Ms. Wykoda Wang presented the staff report. She explained that in Georgia the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is adopted every year and this is usually done in June. This year MPO staff will ask for approval and adoption in August. Since the fiscal year ends June 30, 2014 it is essential to review the projects in the current TIP to determine which projects are OK and which projects will require amendments to shift from FY 2014. She reviewed the list of all the projects in the current TIP and noted which projects required amendments, which projects needed administrative modification, and which projects required no action.

Today she reviewed only the projects that needed to be amended. Her review included the name of the project and the nature of the requested amendment. Some amendments were because of adjustments in cost estimates and some were due to schedule changes. The projects requiring amendments were Bay Street improvements, Ogeechee Road widening, Gwinnett Street, SR 204 Corridor, MPO Strategic Planning Study, Jimmy DeLoach Interchange, Truman Linear Park Trail, Heritage Trail, and Transit projects.

Ms. Paula Kreissler questioned the project starting time for the Truman Linear Park Trail. She thought it was to begin in early 2015 while Ms. Wang believed it would happen in FY 2016 (after June of 2015). Ms. Wang will check on this.

After discussion with GDOT since her initial report, Ms. Wang explained that the Heritage Trail preliminary engineering (PE) listing will be removed from the TIP because PE was already authorized in the past and adding funds for PE does not require re-listing in the TIP. Construction for Heritage Trail will be programmed in the TIP when a source of funding is identified.

Ms. Wang asked the committee to endorse the TIP amendments subject to the following three changes: change the SR 204 funding figures, check on the project status of the Truman Linear Park Trail, and removal of the Heritage Trail from the amendment list.

Mr. Egan opened the public meeting for comments. There being no comments, Mr. Egan closed the public meeting.

It was moved and second to endorse the staff recommendation for endorsement of the FY 2014-2017 TIP Amendments.

**CAC Action: the motion to endorse the staff recommendation for endorsement of the FY 2014-2017 TIP Amendments carried with none opposed.**

### **III. Status Reports**

#### **A. CAT presentation about Bike Share Program**

Ms. Love presented the report in light of the absence of a CAT staff representative, based on what CAT staff had presented at the Technical Coordinating Committee meeting. The Bike Share program was unveiled in January with two stations; one at the Transit Center and the other at Ellis Square. The stations are solar-powered. You can check out a bike with your credit card at the bike kiosk. There is a financial incentive not to keep the bike all day. At this time CAT staff believes tourists are the main users. Check-outs have increased since the weather improved in March. They know the system is too small and hope to expand it soon. A likely place for one future station would be Forsyth Park. Operational funding is from CAT operations budget. FTA funding paid for the station at the Transit Center, and the City paid for the Ellis Square station. Ideally, stations would be about ¼ mile apart. In response to a question about getting stations beyond the historic district, Ms. Love said that would be desirable but for best functionality the system should grow outward from what they have in place.

#### **B. Total Mobility Plan/2040 LRTP Status Report**

Mr. Wilkes, the project manager, introduced Ms. Beverly Davis from RS&H who is the project consultant. Mr. Wilkes noted that today's presentation is on the financial plan. Unlike the usual procedure of extending the planning horizon a few more years, forecasting what additional projects will be needed in the future and adding them to the plan, this plan had to cut projects that are already included in the existing financially balanced long range transportation plan (LRTP) due to projected funding shortfalls.

Staff is working with the Technical Coordinating Committee to create a list of projects that will remain and those that will need to be moved to the "vision plan" (unfunded list of needs). Despite the projected shortfall in funding, the Total Mobility Plan will be a significant step forward in terms of support for complete streets, alternative modes and land use coordination. The specific approaches utilized have been presented to this committee over the past few months.

Ms. Davis stated that today's update is on the financial analysis component of the plan. She outlined the steps taken – identify revenues, updating the project list, updating the remaining project costs, and balancing the project costs with the available revenues.

Her presentation identified revenues – federal & state funds, and SPLOST funds. In reviewing the current plan, many projects are under construction or completed and these projects were removed. The remaining projects were updated and the inflation factor applied and the projects placed in one of the three cost bands. When costs were compared to revenues, there was a shortfall. This must be balanced. This was done by prioritization analysis of the projects in each cost band and then moving projects accordingly.

Ms. Davis then reviewed the projects proposed to be carried forward from the 2035 LRTP with no changes recommended. She continued with projects that staff recommends be moved to an outer cost band or to the vision plan. And finally, she reviewed the projects staff recommends be advanced. This is a first draft and she expects it to be refined and re-presented. These changes reduced the shortfall but did not eliminate it. To eliminate the remaining shortfall, it is recommended that the non-motorized transportation set-aside portion be reduced from \$98,000,000 to \$75,000,000. It is presumed that many of the non-motorized transportation needs will be addressed in road projects under a “complete streets” policy. With this change, the financial plan is balanced.

The next steps are to finalize the project prioritization process, present the revised draft financially constrained plan to the CORE MPO committees & Board in June, including comments gathered from scheduled public involvement meetings, with the adoption in August 2014.

### **C. FY 2015-2018 TIP Priority Establishment**

Ms. Wang presented the report. At this time, work is underway on the new FY 2015-2018 TIP. It is necessary to hold a public meeting for the priority establishment. This year staff is considering new methodology for ranking TIP projects. New criteria would include need, environmental impact, construction-ready, and local funding availability.

When asked when this new methodology would be implemented, Mr. Tom Thomson explained that when it was reviewed by the Technical Coordinating Committee at their meeting just before this meeting, it became clear that more study was needed before full acceptance of the new method. And timing has also become an issue as the pending adoption of Total Mobility Plan approaches as well as amending the current TIP and adopting the new TIP. He believes there won't be a lot of new money and therefore not many new projects that would require new priority criteria.

Ms. Wang noted that since she thought the new method might be ready, this meeting was advertised as a public meeting. Mr. Egan opened the public meeting. There being no comments from the public, Mr. Egan closed the public meeting.

### **D. Update on Advanced Traffic Management System (ATMS) Strategic Plan**

Mr. Thomson reported that the MPO's Congestion Management Process document stated that a third of the traffic congestion could be mitigated by a better traffic signal management system. He described a traffic control center and what goes on in such a center.

He reported that CEMA is now building a new emergency operations center at Hunter Army Airfield. CEMA has agreed to reserve space for a traffic control center.

Thus far, staff and the consultant has collected data, held stakeholder meetings, and went on field trips to other traffic control centers. The next phase of the study will determine ownership of the center, bring in peer panels to present to municipal officials, and

determine what equipment is needed and the costs. He noted that this center would be a cost-saving way to manage traffic as compared to new road construction.

When asked about emissions control being assisted with this system, Mr. Thomson did not have any statistics on the subject, but that yes, anything that reduces idle time in congestion would reduce emissions.

On another question, he said that, while traffic management does not physically increase capacity, per se, if done correctly it will allow for more efficient flow like a capacity project would.

Costs for the system include costs for the center itself, costs for the infrastructure connections, and costs for camera and detection equipment at the intersections.

Mr. Brantley, who went on the field trip to Cobb County, noted that here in Savannah we are managing traffic now, albeit in a small facility on a small scale. Mr. Thomson commented that arranging a tour of our existing facility is also part of study.

#### **E. Introduction to the concept of “Complete Streets”**

Ms. Love reported on this topic in response to a committee request. She used a presentation available from the Complete Streets Coalition. Complete Streets address the issues of safety, access and use by other modes of transportation in addition to cars. Public transportation, walking and other non-motorized means of travel can be accommodated. Many people would likely walk or bike for some of their shorter trips if it seemed safe to do so.

CORE MPO has a Complete Streets policy statement in the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan, but the MPO has not traditionally been a project implementer. GDOT also has a Complete Streets policy in place. The City of Savannah, Chatham County and other municipalities have not yet adopted Complete Streets policies. Complete Streets policies need to be applied during planning and design. Ms. Love showed pictures as examples of the different kinds of streets that can be considered “complete.” What constitutes a complete street varies with each location. Not every roadway needs the same treatment in order to be a complete street.

In response to a question, Ms. Love agreed that pedestrian malls which prohibit motorized vehicles would not be an example of a complete street. She agreed that Price Street and Washington Avenue, where bike lanes have been added, are examples of complete streets.

#### **IV. Agency Reports**

No reports at this time.

**V. Other Business**

Mr. Egan mentioned the MPO's effort in re-structuring the CORE MPO in light of the 2010 census to include a larger demographic area. As part of that, there is an opportunity to redefine the role of the Citizens Advisory Committee in a more meaningful way. He would like to call an additional meeting of the committee to discuss this.

Mr. Thomson explained that, as a result of the 2010 census the Savannah urbanized area expanded to include Richmond Hill and parts of Bryan County and parts of Effingham County. We must define a new planning area.

CORE MPO has three advisory committees plus the Board. How does the expansion affect these committees? How should the committee seats be distributed? What information do the Citizens Advisory Committee members want to hear and be involved with? Is there another way for this committee to be involved? Perhaps this committee prefers to be project-oriented instead of hearing about all the administrative adjustments.

A big change will be that the member agencies will pay dues to establish the local match for the federal funds for transportation planning. Historically only the City of Savannah and Chatham County have provided this. Dues determined by a formula will be implemented in the agreement for all parties.

Mr. Thomson said he hopes to have this re-organization completed by this time next year. This is now the time for discussion. He has spoken to all parties. Richmond Hill wants to participate; Bryan County does not want to be involved at this time. The City of Rincon does not want to participate; Effingham County is on board though.

**VI. Public Comments**

There were no other public comments at this time.

**VII. Announcements**

The next CAC meeting will be on June 19, 2014 at 5:00 PM.

**VIII. Other non-agenda information**

None at this time.

**IX. Adjournment**

There being no other business to come before the committee, the April 17, 2014 Citizens Advisory Committee Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

Jane Love  
Transportation Planner