



CORE MPO Citizens Advisory Committee

October 20, 2022 at 5:30 pm
Minutes

October 20, 2022 CORE MPO Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Voting Members	Representing	Present
Anthony (Tony) Abbott	Chatham County	X
Dr. Daniel Brantley	Chatham County	X
Vacant	Chatham County	
A'riel Johnson	Savannah	X
Armand Turner	Savannah	X
Yolandra Shipp	Savannah	
Vacant	Pooler	
Vacant	Garden City	
Brett Bennett	Effingham County	
Vacant	Port Wentworth	
Vacant	Richmond Hill	
Bill Grainger	Bloomingdale	
Robert Milie	Thunderbolt	X
Vacant	Tybee Island	
Vacant	Vernonburg	
Others	Representing	Present
Julie Yawn	MPC/IT	X
Wykoda Wang	CORE MPO	X
Asia Hernton	CORE MPO	X
Jasmine Champion	CORE MPO	X
Sally Helm	CORE MPO / MPC	X
Joseph Longo	FHWA	X
Ashley Goodrich	Chatham Area Transit	X

I. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Robert Milie motioned to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Tony Abbott. The motion passed with none opposed.

II. Action Items

[1. Approval of the August 18, 2022 Meeting Minutes](#)

Mr. Robert Milie motioned to approve the August 18, 2022 meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Armand Turner. The motion passed with none opposed.

2. Approval of the 2023 CORE MPO Meeting Calendar

Mr. Robert Milie motioned to approve the 2023 CORE MPO Meeting Calendar; seconded by Mr. Armand Turner. The motion passed with none opposed.

3. Y230 Funds Call for Projects

Mr. Robert Milie asked to speak on this before it was presented. He stated that he sat in on this presentation earlier today. This is requesting approval of funding for projects that have been rated and evaluated by the Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). There is no competition for the money, meaning in FY 2023-2024 there is more funding than has been requested. He further stated that the only reason he summarized this agenda item was to speed up the process for CAC to understand. He then made a motion for endorsement.

Ms. Jasmine Champion thanked Mr. Milie for that introduction. The compiled rankings of the projects are listed below.

1. City of Savannah I-516 @ CS 1503 Derenne Ave.
2. Chatham County – I-95 Airways Ave Interchange Improvements
3. Chatham County – SR 204 Access Study
4. Chatham County – I-16 at SR 17
5. Chatham Area Transit – State of Good Repair Fleet Replacement
6. Chatham County – SR 25 Corridor Study
7. Chatham County – President Street Railroad Crossing Elimination Project
8. City of Tybee Island SR 26/US 80 Over the Bull River
9. City of Savannah- Tide to Town / Middleground Rd phase
10. Chatham County -Chevis Rd Improvement Project
11. Chatham County- Gerrard Avenue Improvement Project
12. Chatham County- Green Island Multipurpose Trail

The TCC committee has endorsed these rankings, allowing staff to make changes as needed in the future.

Mr. Robert Milie motioned to endorse the TCC recommendations for the Y230 Funds Call for Projects; seconded by Mr. Armand Turner. The motion passed with none opposed.

4. CORE MPO's Y301 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Call for Projects

Ms. Asia Hernton said the CORE MPO staff received five applications, all of which were eligible.

Mr. Robert Milie said what we are voting on is for FY 2023-2024. FY 2023 is funded. FY 2024 is the issue - it is unfunded and there has been \$440,000 of requests. The issue we voted on in the previous matter (Y230 Call for Projects), there should be surplus from that. It should roll over and help fund this Y301 portion.

Mr. Robert Milie motioned to approve the TCC recommendations for the Y301 Transportation Alternatives Call for Projects; seconded by Mr. Armand Turner. The motion passed with none opposed.

III. Status Reports

5. 2050 MTP Update

Ms. Wykoda Wang said we will focus on the public participation portion of the 2050 MTP update with the CAC committee.

Ms. Sally Helm said we are currently in the first round of public meetings. We have participated in over 30 neighborhood and community meetings and there are several more outreach events in the next few weeks. Staff has launched the CORE MPO social media outreach. The Instagram page has over 100 followers and the Facebook page has reached over 3300 people. The MTP update has been featured on multiple platforms, including local organizations', governments', and news media's websites, such as WTOC, and websites of the City of Savannah, Chatham County, Pooler, Savannah Agenda, and Port Wentworth. Staff created a QR code, which seems to be more popular with the younger generation. We are looking at these survey results to see where the gaps in coverage are. We are finding the gaps to be in the younger generation, the elderly, the lower income, and the disabled communities. While we have covered many areas through outreach, we are still circling back around to try and close those gaps. Staff has presented at several community meetings and has two pop up events scheduled on the weekends.

Ms. Asia Hernton said the 2050 MTP survey has been open since September 1st. We have received 371 responses as of October 11th. The survey links have been posted to the CORE MPO website and translated into four different languages: English, Spanish, Chinese, and Vietnamese. We have received multiple responses on the Spanish and Chinese surveys. The survey topics include Roadways, Bicycles, Pedestrians, Public Transport, Equity, and Resilience. The zip codes that have produced the most responses so far are 31405, 31401, 31419, and 31407. We would like to see more responses and encourage all CORE MPO committee members to spread the word about the survey. The survey is open to residents in Effingham and Bryan Counties as well.

Most people who have taken the survey drive a personal vehicle. The Savannah area has a higher percentage of people who walk and bike compared to other cities in the state of Georgia. Because of this, we want to increase input among those who walk, bike, or take public transit. Additionally, we would like our survey respondents to be more diverse. The Savannah area is a diverse urban core. There have been more middle-aged people taking the survey. We are not getting as much input from the younger population as we would like. Wykoda did go to a local high school to present on the 2050 MTP update and there was an uptake in respondents from the younger generation. The average household income of respondents is \$100,000 or more. Very few lower income households have participated in the survey. We want to close that gap. We are extending the survey into November to give more people an opportunity to respond.

In general, respondents want to maintain and repair our roadways. Even though the majority of respondents own a vehicle, or their major form of transportation is driving alone, there is still significant interest in a local rail service and public transportation. Respondents also want bike lanes that are protected by a barrier and greenways that support multiple modes of non-motorized transportation.

Mr. Tony Abbott asked if staff had any statistics from the City of Savannah when they went from two lanes to one on Price Street to create the bike lane? Has the Savannah Police Department (SPD) provided any data regarding speed and the infractions that were enforced prior to creating the bike lane and then after? Did anyone explore some sort of barrier to slow people down? That should be a consideration when moving forward as a speed issue.

Ms. Wykoda Wang said that is a good idea. We can work with the City of Savannah and use one of the corridors as a pilot study regarding some of the projects that have been implemented, like Washington Avenue and Price Street that have been converted. Bike Walk Savannah has been collecting bicycle and pedestrian counts and she has volunteered for some of those locations. We have the pre- and post-implementation data to compare. The idea of having the City of Savannah do a pilot study with barrier separated bike lane would be very good.

Ms. Hernton said 67% of respondents wanted increasing green infrastructure and nature-based infrastructure to reduce flooding, heat stress, and improve the health of the environment. 74% prioritized identifying and targeting high need population areas for transit investment. This was the most popular answer choice of all the answer choices on the survey.

Dr. Brantley said that most of the respondents are white with a household income of \$100,000 or more. That is not where most people are. How can we reach out to the people that are not represented? Mr. Robert Milie said they are going to provide hard printed copies so they can go into districts that traditionally by socio-economic status may not have access to the internet. Staff will provide hard copies in these areas to try and gather data as well. Mr. Milie said Thunderbolt has a newsletter that goes out every month. We can include the QR code in the newsletter. Dr. Brantley said we need to keep trying to reach the poor. Mr. Milie said what he really appreciated about these girls in this office is the fact that they heard exactly what you said earlier, even before it was ever said. They concluded that they haven't had enough of a diverse return on this and extended the survey time, then they sought out more ways to get that return so the representation of the community was truly there. He would like to give them hats off. It is easier to close the survey and say this is the data that was received, but they opted to increase their workload to reach more people.

Mr. Armand Turner asked is staff considered offering incentives for taking the survey? Ms. Wang said we have handouts that we give to meeting attendees, however, we have had very low attendance at the meetings. We have reflective bracelets and chargers that we pass out at meetings. When we go to the community events this weekend and next, we do have some small things to hand out. Mr. Turner asked "have you considered setting up in a central location somewhere to see what kind of traffic you could get on a busy day?". Ms. Hernton said that is something we can try. We would like to have as wide of an outreach strategy as possible. CAT was very helpful in allowing us to pass out fliers on their buses. We could possibly set up a booth at Oglethorpe Avenue. Mr. Turner stated that receiving over 300 surveys in a short amount of time is impressive.

Dr. Brantley said we should go to public spaces that are not necessarily events. People go to the parks all the time, like Lake Mayer. That would be a better place to go. Ms. Wang said we conduct outreach at events because of the higher attendance. Several events are coming up in the future and CORE MPO staff will be in attendance to spread information.

[6. CORE MPO Regional Freight Transportation Plan Update](#)

Ms. Wykoda Wang said the presentation is on the website and shows all the updates from the consultant group that is updating the Freight Transportation Plan. The available documents are posted to the website as well. They are very technical, so if anyone has any questions, please let staff know.

[7. Urban Flooding Model Study](#)

Ms. Jasmine Champion said the University of Georgia is the selected consultant on this project. They presented earlier today to the TCC committee. The Project Management Plan has been submitted. The kickoff was in August. The steering and stakeholder committees have been selected. Staff is working on a webpage for this study.

[8. Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and Thoroughfare Plan Status Update](#)

Ms. Asia Hernton said recently, at the steering committee meeting, members identified several roads and areas that should be added to the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. Some of those roads are Middleground Road, roads around the schools within the Chatham County area, Abercorn Street, Montgomery Crossroads, Cottonvale Road, and Dutchtown Road. In the future, staff will continue to compile a list of problem and opportunity areas to add to the plan. Staff is collecting data such as bike and pedestrian accident data from Numetric, population data from the American Community Survey, and infrastructure data from GIS to create a comprehensive assessment of the non-motorized infrastructure environment in the area. Additionally, once a larger list of projects is compiled, staff will seek public input to better prioritize these projects. The projected adoption date of these plans is June 2023.

[9. SR 26 US 80 Project Status Report Update](#)

No Comment, report attached to agenda.

[10. Discretionary PL Funds Applications](#)

Ms. Wykoda Wang said the CORE MPO staff submitted three studies for this funding. All three studies were denied. Each of the studies has alternative funding. The Presidents Street and SR 25 Corridor Studies both received Y230 funding, and the City of Savannah is applying for the Reconnecting Community Grant for the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal project.

IV. Agency Reports

[Information attached under Notices.](#)

V. Other Business

[11. CAT's MICROTRANSIT PROJECT](#)

Ms. Ashley Goodrich said Micro Transit is a smaller transit service provided where normal CAT buses may or may not be useful or available. Micro Transit can be designed as same day service (Demand Response) with similarities to CAT Mobility (ADA paratransit service). The CAT Mobility service is a next day scheduled service vs same day micro transit service. Micro transit is considered a mobility on demand. Similar to rideshare apps, this service works by submitting a rideshare request by phone or mobile app. While this will solve many challenges, there are both advantages and disadvantages to the service.

Disadvantages include reliance on technology. Advantages are dynamic, flexible transit scheduling. Flexibility is key to scale up or down to match demand to supply for the areas this service could be provided. Micro Transit is set up by request on phone or mobile app. A dynamic routing program is instantly put into place with a rider pick up with shared ride transportation service at a drop off location through design of the micro transit mode. The Blue on the Map is One Quarter (1/4) Mile away from each CAT Bus Route. First Mile/Last Mile Connection allows customers to book an end-to-end transit trip if fixed route is not within walking distance. First mile/last mile connections allow customers to book an end-to-end transit trip if the fixed route is not within walking distance. Typically, Micro Transit is helpful for neighborhoods that need service but have low ridership for fixed route bus or do not have access to existing bus services. CAT is exploring multiple questions related to the service, such as "Does Chatham Area Transit have to operate this service or could the service be contracted out to somebody else?".

A TNC is a Transportation Network Company, such as Uber or Lyft. These types of companies provide both the dynamic routing and scheduling that come as a component to micro transit as well as can provide drivers and contract services.

Methodology:

- Off Peak: flexible service alternative during periods of low demand.
- On-demand service hours cover off-peak periods (e.g. weekends, evenings, or late-nights), enhancing coverage at lower cost per trip compared to fixed-route bus mode.
- Available at Designated Stops along CAT Bus Routes.
- All trips must take place within a specific service zone, start or end.

Part of what we are looking at is when you talk about a specific service zone, both the start and the end, where would that be and what landmarks would be within the zones. Micro Transit would be a new divisional mode separate from the fixed route, including any bus, express bus, or commuter service as well as our ADA and Para Transit services. The methodology for micro transit on demand services is as a connection service, and the goal would be to connect riders to higher frequency back to our fixed route corridor services. Off peak flexible alternative services could be designed during periods of low demand and cover off peak periods, not just what would be on peak such as a morning a.m. commute or a p.m. afternoon commute. It could include weekends, evenings, or late-nights, enhancing coverage at a lower cost per trip as compared to the traditional bus services. We believe this would be available at designated stops along CAT bus routes. All trips must take place within a specific service zone to start or end.

Dr. Brantley asked where this has been done before. Ms. Goodrich said you are starting to see this in most suburban cities and towns across the country. The very first micro transit service was implemented with UBER as a TNC in Pinellas County Transit in Florida. This is a popular model in Arlington, Texas and major metro markets like Nashville, Atlanta, Hampton Rhodes Virginia, as well as different college towns and collegiate areas.

Mr. Milie said he has met with CAT's CEO and toured the facility and listened to some of the progressive ideas. This is very impressive. This not only deals with the ¼ miles on the streets, but it deals with the larger issues, labor/driver shortage issues etc. Mr. Milie recommended touring the facility with CAT's CEO to learn more.

Dr. Brantley asked about the operator shortage in regard to micro transit. Ms. Goodrich said what we would like to see with this type of service is that our outer reaching areas with low ridership and/or occasional ridership, have transportation access. A big part to micro transit is that it does not require a Class B commercial CDL bus driver. That will help in our training components and our hiring and training development. We want to bring in new drivers and train the new drivers so we can work them up through the system into our fixed route and commercial Class B.

VI. Other Public Comments (limit to 3 minutes)

No Public Comments.

VII. Notices

[12. Next CORE MPO CAC meeting December 8, 2022 at 5:30pm](#)

[13. GDOT Project Status Update Report](#)

No Comment on the report attached to agenda.

[14. Chatham County Project Status Update Report](#)

No Comment on the report attached to agenda.

[15. City of Savannah Project Status Update Report](#)

No Comment on the report attached to agenda.

[16. Chatham Area Transit Status Update Report](#)

No Comment on the report attached to agenda.

[17. Savannah International Airport Project Status Report Update](#)

No Comment on the report attached to agenda.

[18. LATS Project Status Update Report](#)

No Comment on the report attached to agenda.

[19. TIP Tracking Status Update](#)

No Comment on the report attached to agenda.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the October 20, 2022 CAC meeting was adjourned.

The Chatham County- Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.