



EDFAC

June 16, 2022 at 10:00 am
Minutes

**June 16, 2022 Economic Development & Freight Advisory Committee
(EDFAC) Meeting**

Voting Members	Representing	<u>Present</u>
Pamela Bernard	Chatham County Engineering	X
CPT Anthony Moltz	Hunter Army Airfield	
Amanda Clement	Bryan County Planning	
Jared Downs	Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce	X
Ned Green	GDOT Policy and Freight Branch	X
Joseph Drake	Gulfstream	
Mark Denmark	Savannah Airport Commission	
Brandt Herndon	Effingham Industrial Development Authority	X
Barry Stanton	City of Savannah	X
Trip Tollison	SEDA	
Dennis Jones	CEMA	X
Alternate	Representing	<u>Present</u>
Jim Aeillo	Savannah Airport Commission	X
Jesse Dillon	SEDA	X
Others	Representing	<u>Present</u>
Wykoda Wang	CORE MPO	X
Vivian Canizares	GDOT Freight Planning	X
Asia Hernton	CORE MPO	X
Christopher Lindsey	Cambridge Systematics, Inc.	X
Denise Grabowski	Symbiosity	X
Julie Yawn	MPC/IT	X
Melanie Wilson	MPC	X

I. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Jared Downs motioned to approve the agenda; seconded by Ms. Pamela Bernard. The motion passed with non-opposed.

II. Action Items

1. [Approval of the August 19, 2021 CORE MPO EDFAC Committee meeting minutes](#)

Mr. Jared Downs motioned to approve the August 19, 2021 CORE MPO EDFAC meeting minutes; seconded by Ms. Jesse Dillion. The motion passed with non-opposed.

III. Other Business

2. [2050 MTP Update](#)

Ms. Wykoda Wang said the 2050 MTP is the MPO's long range transportation plan. It will be multi-modal covering Bike/ped, freight, congestions, roadways, etc. We are developing Goals and Objectives. We are developing a survey to help refine the Goals and Objectives and help prioritize projects. The draft survey is developed, and staff would like input from this committee, particularly on the roadway and freight priorities.

For the Freight Priorities, we want people to rank up to three top choices. That includes roadway improvements, grade separation, bridge replacement, truck routing and signage, operational improvements, and grant application.

Ms. Melanie Wilson, the MPC Executive Director, said one of the things we wanted to do this time with the survey is to make sure there are definitions about what things mean.

Ms. Vivian Canizares of GDOT said we will send comments after the meeting. We would like to get input from others here. The roadway, between the new construction and the road expansion, can be combined to be one. Both choices are either widening or new construction.

Ms. Jesse Dillon of SEDA asked what about the priorities toward rail crossings. Not improving the rail crossings but improving the roads as they relate to rail. Ms. Wang said grade separation would cover that.

Ms. Wang and Ms. Canizares suggested Truck Parking questions.

IV. Status Reports

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

Mr. Christopher Lindsey, Project Manager, Cambridge Systematics, Inc. said the Freight Plan update was kicked off approximately one month ago. We want to understand what has changed since the last Freight Plan was completed. We want to make sure those changes are reflected in this update. We will be using www.menti.com (code 74177315) to get feedback in real time.

There is another study going on at the same time. The GDOT Coastal Empire Study is looking at a lot of the same major impacts to the freight network that we are looking at in this study. We have a little bit of more of an expanded scope when it comes to things like Land Use Policies/Programs that we will be factoring in. We will be coordinating closely with that study and making sure we are mutually supporting each other.

The key technical tasks

- Project Management & Coordination/Stakeholder Outreach
- Freight Needs Assessment and Analysis
- Land Use Assessment
- Economic Development and Market Assessment
- Environmental and Community Impacts
- Recommendations for Future Land Uses
- Final Recommendations and Report

Stakeholder Outreach

Some of the development of the tools we have been using has been started. Outreach will include meetings like this, virtual forums for a broader stakeholder community, a dedicated page on the MPO website providing information about the plan update, and direct outreach to key stakeholders such as GA Ports Authority, CSX, Norfolk Southern, and others. Ms. Pamela Bernard suggested reaching out to Ft. Steward and 165th Airlift Wing. Ms. Melanie Wilson suggested more equity involvement. Give a voice to the lower income neighborhoods that have railroads through them. Reach out to the City Managers that have rail going through their communities. Ms. Wang suggested talking to the school boards and the universities since they order a lot of supplies. Mr. Lindsey said a lot of the tools that they have like the interactive mapping is a survey that can go out to everyone. Ms. Dillon said as the four-county JDA that was part of the Hyundai motor group announcement, I am certain we can come together and provide a robust list of people that should be getting this survey and push it from our organization as well. Ms. Wang said since our study area is three counties, part of our emphasis is to build freight resiliency. During hurricane evacuation, who in Effingham and Bryan Counties can we contact? Mr. Dennis Jones from CEMA said he will send that contact information.

Freight Needs Assessment and Analysis

There are eight specific subtasks that collectively describe network conditions, performance, and needs.

- Existing/Future Freight and Goods movement assessment
- Freight Performance Measures
- Forecast Future Freight Growth
- Regional Freight Profiles and Assessment
- Freight Network Congestion, Bottleneck, and Safety and Security
- Truck Parking Inventory and Truck Restrictions
- Freight Resiliency
- Freight Needs Assessment

Land Use Assessment and Analysis

This task focuses on the CORE MPO planning area as well as looking at the broader three county area - Chatham, Bryan, and Effingham counties. We are collecting a lot of Land Use data on what current zoning is and what future Land Use might look like in the region. The purpose is to assess the impact of Land Use on freight and freight on Land Use decisions. We are reviewing the Comprehensive Plans in the areas and will use that information for this freight plan update. Ms. Wang asked if the agencies represented presently have any GIS files that could be shared such as future freight developments? Ms. Dillon said they use GEO as well as SAGIS for a lot of their mapping. We might have some additional files we have done with our partners at T & H with mapping and future Industrial Usage out in that corridor, specifically with what is happening in Bloomingdale as it connects to Jimmy Deloach.

Economic Development and Market Assessment

This task will be looking at information on employment and economic output for the region's freight intensive industries. We will also be looking at key economic transit impact freight to try to understand their implications for the region's federal trade policies, Ecommerce, and supply chains disruptions.

Environmental / Equity Community Impact Analysis

This task characterizes the impacts of goods movement on the environment and the community. It will help us to understand if there is a concentration of grade crossings in the area or if there is a concentration of grade crossings that don't have as many safety warning devices. We will try to understand where freight might have disproportionate impacts on the environment and the community. This will help the region to come up with strategies to prevent or mitigate those issues. We will be using the most recent census data to identify some of the areas we want to focus on from an environmental justice perspective.

Recommendations

The recommendations will include a comprehensive set of Policy and Program, Land Use, and Infrastructure recommendations to improve performance, reduce negative impacts, and provide economic benefits. This would include things like looking at Policies and Programs that support anticipated and desired freight related economic development, preservation of land for future freight-centric growth, infrastructure improvements, bottleneck reductions, improved access to truck parking, etc.

The final report will describe how strategies were developed, evaluated, and prioritized. It will outline implementation steps for incorporation into the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and Transportation Improvement Program and provide a strategic blueprint for the future of freight mobility in the region and preserving and enhancing economic competitiveness.

There have been a lot of big changes since the last freight plan was conducted.

- Infrastructure investments that have been completed or planned.
- The Harbor Expansion Project
- Mason Mega Rail Yard
- GDOT MMIP Projects that have been implemented or currently being implemented in the region
- Changes with Land Use and Development.
- Federal Transportation Legislation, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Justice 40 Initiative

There has been a lot of planning at the regional level.

- SR 21 Access Management Study
- SR 307 Corridor Study
- State Freight Plan Update
- State Rail Plan
- Coastal Empire Study
- Effingham County Transportation Master Plan

Ms. Pamela Bernard said there are a lot of big GDOT projects that are either underway or that are planned in this area and a lot of them are related to freight. When we have these large projects like the I-16 project currently going on, a lot of traffic shifts trying to avoid construction. This causes some of the secondary roads to be overwhelmed while the construction is taking place. Has anyone looked at the timing of these projects and where traffic is going to be pushed to? Mr. Lindsey said that would be an effort on its own to understand, the traffic impacts of work zones. This is not something we would specifically focus on, that would be interesting and useful information to know what happens on those roadways. Ms. Wykoda Wang said the Talmadge Bridge project, Presidents Street Overpass Study, and US 80 Corridor Study are new changes since the last update.

The 2016 RFTP laid the foundation for freight planning in the region. It provided detailed recommendations for land use and infrastructure. We want to make sure and build on this effort and enhance it. Beyond updating the existing plan, this update provides an opportunity to enhance the region's freight program through Implementation strategies, Equity, Funding and Grant opportunities, and Truck parking and other state and federal freight planning priorities.

What are the key differentiators for this plan and how do you define success for this plan? Ms. Wilson said to have multiple partners with regards to implementing this plan. Mr. Lindsey said we will make sure to identify who should be lead partner, who should be supporting partner, as well as stakeholders that are needed to execute the plan, etc. Ms. Wilson said there are time restraints in some cases to get the funding to do the work. Ms. Bernard said from a transportation perspective, what would be helpful would be if you could identify specific projects that are needed, i.e., roads or corridors that need operational improvements or developments. Mr. Lindsey said GDOT has a

Coastal Empire Study that is currently going on. They will be making some recommendations as a part of that. For this plan update, we will coordinate with them to draw in the things they identify in that study.

Draft Freight Vision, Goals, and Objectives

We want to make sure the draft versions of these are consistent with and reflect what is in the region's current Long-Range Plan. We understand that the 2050 MTP is being developed, and we will make sure everything is revised to be consistent with that. The goal we are going for is the Freight Vision and Freight Goals and Objectives have that specific focus on the freight network but are also supportive of what the region is doing at a broader level.

The vision for the Regional Freight Transportation Plan is to promote sustainable economic growth throughout the region by sharing quality access and connectivity and safe and efficient mobility of people and goods on a shared multi-modal network. We will add more emphasis on Equity, Resiliency and Safety.

Draft Regional Freight Transportation Plan Goals

- Safety and Security – provide a safe, secure, and resilient multimodal freight system
- State of Good Repair- Maintain a state of good repair of infrastructure critical to multimodal freight movement
- Accessibility, Mobility and Connectivity- Improve connectivity to regional freight and industrial hubs, connectivity between freight modes, and reduce barriers to mobility
- System Performance-Improve the reliability of freight movements to improve efficiency and support economic competitiveness
- Intergovernmental Coordination- Build regional and statewide freight partnerships to help maximize freight funding opportunities and the transportation and economic development impacts of the investments brought by those funds
- Environment & Quality of Life- Minimize adverse impacts of freight operations on communities and the environment while increasing community awareness of freight's importance.

Draft Freight Objectives

- Safety and Security – Reduce the number and rate of fatalities and injuries involving freight movements. Improve access to truck parking in the region.
- State of Good Repair- Maintain freight assets at acceptable conditions.
- Accessibility, Mobility, and Connectivity- Reduce the number and magnitude of freight bottlenecks and Improve connections between freight modes.
- System Performance- Provide reliable and predictable travel times along freight corridors.
- Intergovernmental Coordination- Facilitate partnerships between CORE MPO, GDOT, GA Ports, and city and county governments.
- Environment and Quality of Life- Prevent and reduce disproportionate negative freight impacts to environmental justice communities. Reduce emissions and other environmental impacts associated with freight movements.

We have started the project management and stakeholder outreach tasks.

- Developing a draft of the stakeholder survey
- Timelines for virtual forums
- Looking at the future freight goods movement assessment, truck volume data, commodity flows, freight performance measures, etc.

Ms. Melanie Wilson asked about the partnership with CSX, Georgia Ports, and other inter-governmental coordination and making sure these partnerships are noted.

Next Steps

- Stakeholder Outreach
 - Online survey – tentative early July 2022 launch
 - Virtual Forum #1 – November 2022
- Freight Needs Assessment
 - Existing and Future Freight and Goods Movement Assessment
 - Freight Performance Measures
 - Forecasting Future Freight Growth
- Provide update to EDFAC at October 2022 meeting
- Forecasting Future Freight Growth

V. Information Reports (verbal)

None.

VI. Other Public Comments (limit to 3 minutes)

No Public Comments

VII. Notices

[4. Next EDFAC Committee Meeting August 18, 2022 at 10:00 am.](#)

Ms. Wykoda Wang said there will be no EDFAC meeting on August 18, 2022. This will allow the Regional Freight Plan Update to gather more data to present at the next meeting. The EDFAC committee will meet again on October 20, 2022.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the June 16, 2022 EDFAC meeting is 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.