



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room
110 East State Street

February 25, 2004

10:00 A.M.

Members Present:

John Broderick
Michael Brown
Buddy Carter
Dr. Billy Hair
Tom Lamar
Timothy S. Mackey
Lee Mundell
Radney Simpson
Randy Weitman, P.E.

Others Present:

Allan Black, P.E.
Betty Carter
Courtland Hyser
Keith Melton
Teresa A. Scott
Chris Simons, P.E.
Bob Thomson
Thomas Thomson, P.E., AICP
Mike Weiner, P.E.
Robert Wilder
Mark Wilkes, PE, AICP
Wykoda Wang

Representing:

Chatham Area Transit
City of Savannah
City of Pooler
Chair, Chatham County Commission
Chair, ACAT
Chair, MPC
Chair, CAC
GDOT – Atlanta
Georgia Ports Authority

Representing:

Chatham County
GDOT – Jesup
MPC Staff
GDOT - Atlanta
GDOT - Jesup
PBS&J
City of Tybee Island
MPC Executive Director
City of Savannah
Interested Citizen
MPC Staff
MPC Staff

Dr. Hair called the February 25, 2004 meeting of the Policy Committee to order. Hearing no corrections or additions, the agenda was approved as submitted.

Committee Reports:

1. Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Mr. Lamar stated that the ACAT Committee met earlier in the month to review the information items that are before the Policy Committee today. The Teleride paratransit system has reported an increase in their service numbers.

2. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Mundell stated that there was no representative from GDOT, nor was there a representative from the City or the County. Also, several members have withdrawn from the committee.

3. Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Transportation Staff

Mr. Wilkes stated that the TCC reviewed the information items that are before the Policy Committee today.

III. Public Comments on Action Items

There were no public comments.

IV. Action Items

A. Approval of Minutes - November 19, 2003 and December 17, 2003

Mr. Carter **moved** to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2003 and December 17, 2003 Policy Committee. Mr. Mundell seconded the motion.

Policy Committee Action: **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to approve the minutes of the November 19, 2003 and December 17, 2003 Policy Committee minutes as presented. Voting were Mr. Broderick, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carter, Dr. Hair, Mr. Lamar, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Mundell, and Mr. Simpson. Mr. Weitman was not in the room when the vote was taken.

B. Long Range Transportation Plan Authorization for MPC Executive Director to Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Regarding Consultant Assistance with Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan (PBS&J)

Mr. Thomson stated that during a meeting in Atlanta, GDOT staff offered the assistance of a consultant who would work with staff to complete the Long Range Transportation Plan. Entering into this memorandum of agreement would provide staff with consultant services necessary to complete the LRTP update by June. The agreement is to repay \$60,000 over three fiscal years. There is a leftover balance of funding ready to assist in the reimbursement for this consultant assistance.

Mr. Mackey **moved** to approve the authorization. Mr. Carter seconded the motion.

Policy Committee Action: **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to approve Long Range Transportation Plan Authorization for MPC Executive Director to Sign Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) Regarding Consultant Assistance with Post, Buckley, Schuh & Jernigan (PBS&J). Voting were Mr. Broderick, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carter, Dr. Hair, Mr. Lamar, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Mundell, and Mr. Simpson. Mr. Weitman was not in the room when the vote was taken.

C. East-West Corridor Feasibility Study Analysis

Mr. Thomson stated that there have been recent discussions about the need to reach some conclusion on the East-West Corridor Study. The proposal before the Policy Committee is to continue where that study left off, to determine if staff could identify additional alternatives that would be more successful at being creative in reaching a consensus with the community and all of the stakeholders that would be involved in this. The recommended action would allow the Executive Director of the Metropolitan Planning Commission to move forward through a process that would acquire consultant services and to bring a report back to the Policy Committee by September. The Policy Committee may want to indicate a dollar limit for this effort.

Dr. Hair stated that the Executive Director arranged a trip to Tampa to study the improvements that were adopted to improve flow of traffic from the Port of Tampa. The area has had impressive results from the approach that was used to solve their problems.

Mr. Brown moved to a adopt recommended policy statement subject to the condition that the phrase 'recommended actions' be used in the sentence instead and include language about considering the capacity issues throughout those corridors, to consider the consequences of no action in those corridors, and that any such action would include land use, this is meant in most comprehensive way which includes residential protection and

enhancement, pedestrian and amenity corridors to include commercial vitality and to have full citizen and stakeholder engagement in the process. Mr. Mackey seconded the motion.

Mr. Mundell stated that the Citizen Advisory Committee would look forward to being involved in the public involvement process for this project.

Mr. Carter asked whether the Executive Director would have an idea in six weeks about how much would be spent.

Mr. Thomson replied that once there is consultant to negotiate with then a price would be determined. The matter would return to the Policy Committee as an information item at the next meeting.

Policy Committee Action:

The motion carried with none opposed. The motion was to approve the authorization for the Executive Director to develop a scope of work to continue exploring options for the East-West Corridor. The motion further requested that the scope should build upon previous studies, and include additional feasibility analysis and public involvement as required to reach a recommended action or actions for consideration. Subject to the conditions that language is included that would consider the capacity issues throughout those corridors, consider the consequences of no action in those corridors, and that any such action would include land use, this is meant in most comprehensive way which includes residential protection and enhancement, pedestrian and amenity corridors to include commercial vitality and to have full citizen and stakeholder engagement in the process. Voting were Mr. Broderick, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carter, Dr. Hair, Mr. Lamar, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Mundell, Mr. Simpson, and Mr. Weitman.

Status Reports:

A. Congestion Management System

Mr. Wilkes stated that the CMS is a federal requirement for Transportation Management Areas such as Savannah. The MPO has contracted with Carter & Burgess to develop the CMS, which will identify appropriate congestion measurements and acceptable levels of congestion for the community. The study will also identify locations where congestion presently occurs and where it is likely to occur in the future. Finally the study will recommend and prioritize strategies as well as projects to alleviate congestion. Staff

anticipates receiving recommendations within the next few months with a proposed final document available by the next Policy Committee meeting.

B. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update Draft Goals and Objectives

Mr. Hyser provided a status report on the draft LRTP Goals and Objectives. The draft document that is before the committee represents the compilation of existing planning materials. The Amenities Resolution that was approved by CUTS in November was also included. Any comments or additions to the document would be welcomed during the revision process.

**C. Draft FY 2005-2007 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
Development TIP**

Mr. Wilkes stated that copies of the existing FY 2004-2006 TIP document were distributed prior to the meeting. Staff will work with GDOT staff and local staff to begin to develop the new TIP as financial information becomes available. The target date for completion would be June 2004.

D. Draft FY 2005 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Development

Mr. Wilkes stated that the UPWP is the staff work program for the coming fiscal year, which begins July 1, 2004. A draft document was submitted to GDOT in December and a copy was distributed to committee members prior to this meeting. The draft was based on preliminary assumptions about funding levels and work products for the coming year. The document will be updated as final financial figures become available.

Information Items:

A. Chatham Area Transit

Mr. Broderick stated that the 106 Process is continuing for the Centre Station Project. CAT is also on target to reach the goal of installing 100 bus shelters this budget year.

B. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Scott reviewed a status report that was distributed at the meeting.

Mr. Mackey asked if the bridge shoulder widening project over Interstate 516 at Stiles Avenue would have any impact on Stiles Avenue.

Ms. Scott replied that the project would have to effect on Stiles Avenue.

Mr. Wilder stated that the project involving State Route 21 from Smith Avenue/CS590 North to State Route 307 has been in the concept stage for years. He would like the Policy Committee to do something to move the project forward.

Dr. Hair stated that the opening of the Truman Parkway from DeRenne Avenue to Eisenhower Drive has been scheduled for March 19, 2004. The GDOT Commissioner plans to be in town almost all day in order to visit various projects. Additional information will be available on this event.

Mr. Mackey asked for additional information on the project at State Route 25/Bay Street from Interstate 516 to the Bay Street Viaduct.

Ms. Scott replied that plans are to widen this road to four lanes with curb and gutter and sidewalks from Interstate 516 to the Bay Street Viaduct.

C. Chatham County

Mr. Black reviewed a status report that was distributed at the meeting.

Mr. Mackey requested an update on the project listed for Ogeechee Road at US 80/ Interstate 516 and Victory Drive.

Mr. Black replied that County staff is working with GDOT staff and City staff. At this point there is no solution that would satisfy all parties involved.

Mr. Brown added that safety issues and drainage issues are driving forces on this project. Right-of-way must be elevated to address the drainage. When elevating right-of-way the houses that are closest either lose access or have restricted access. Those property owners do not want that to occur.

Mr. Hungerpiller requested clarification on the White Bluff Road extension.

Mr. Black replied that the original project was widening from Windsor Road down to Old Mill Road with a four lane divided section and then a three lane section from Old Mill Road to Rose Dhu Road. Following analysis of the traffic and needs, the FHWA felt that the three lane section was not warranted. Staff revised the need and purpose statement to have that shown as a two lane. Staff is awaiting comments from FHWA on the revised document.

Mr. Carter asked when the Pooler Parkway project would be completed.

Mr. Black replied that the project would be finished toward the end of March.

D. City of Savannah

Mr. Weiner reviewed a status report that was distributed at the meeting.

Mr. Mackey requested additional information on the Gwinnett Street widening project.

Mr. Weiner replied that the widening would occur between Interstate 16 and Stiles Avenue. A four-lane divided roadway is envisioned. A safety project that is intended for an area just west of Stiles Avenue would align a sharp curve. Staff is also reevaluating a project that might restructure the intersection at Stiles Avenue and Louisville Road.

Mr. Hungerpillar asked whether the intersection cameras at the intersection of White Bluff Road and Abercorn Street would monitor White Bluff Road rather than solely focusing on Abercorn Street.

Mr. Weiner replied that the camera is bi-directional and only the left turn lane is filmed at present.

E. Georgia Ports Authority

Mr. Weitman stated that there was nothing to report at this time

F. Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport

Mr. Fidler stated that a new road under construction around the southwest perimeter of the airport. This would open about 100 acres for commercial aviation related development.

G. STIP Minor Amendment #3 I-16 Bridges Widening PI #511180

Dr. Hair stated that this item was included for information.

H. Invitation to Final Stakeholder Committee Meeting for GDOT's Interstate System Plan

Dr. Hair stated that this item was included for information.

VII. Public Participation Opportunity

Dr. Hair asked if there was anyone present with a transportation issue to address.

Mr. Bob Thomson, City of Tybee Island, informed the committee that the City of Tybee Island is in preliminary discussions with GDOT for a dedicated and separated multi-use lane for Lazaretto Creek Bridge. This project would be five years out for the U. S. Highway 80 widening. The project is consistent with the local Bikeway Plan.

VIII. Adjournment

There being no further business, the February 25, 2004, Policy Committee meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

Mark A. Wilkes, P. E., AICP
Director of Transportation Planning