



## CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

### POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING SUMMARY

Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room  
110 East State Street

April 21, 2004

10:00 A.M.

#### Members Present:

Russ Abolt  
Michael Brown  
Buddy Carter  
George Fidler, P.E.  
Dr. Billy Hair  
Tom Lamar  
Scott Lansing  
Timothy S. Mackey  
Lee Mundell  
Walter Parker  
Radney Simpson  
Randy Weitman, PE

#### Representing:

Chatham County  
City of Savannah  
City of Pooler  
Savannah Hilton Head International Airport  
Chatham County  
Chair, ACAT  
Chatham Area Transit  
Chairman MPC  
Chair, CAC  
City of Tybee Island  
GDOT – Atlanta  
Georgia Ports Authority

#### Others Present:

Allan Black  
Betty Carter  
Keith Melton  
Teresa A. Scott  
Thomas Thomson, P.E., AICP  
Mike Weiner, P. E.  
Mark Wilkes, PE, AICP  
Wykoda Wang  
Ardis Wood

#### Representing:

Chatham County  
GDOT – Jesup  
GDOT - Atlanta  
GDOT - Jesup  
MPC Executive Director  
City of Savannah  
MPC Staff  
MPC Staff  
Interested Citizen

Dr. Hair called the meeting to order.

#### **I. Approval of Agenda**

Hearing no objections or corrections, Dr. Hair stated that the agenda would stand approved as prepared.

## II. Committee Reports

### A. Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Mr. Lamar reported that during the recent meeting, ACAT approved the same action items that appear on the Policy Committee agenda. The committee also reviewed changes to the Teleride Handbook.

### B. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Mundell stated that representatives from the City, County, Georgia DOT, as well as Mr. Thomson were present to share information with the committee. The CAC continued to express concerns about the timetable for widening Abercorn Street Extension, as well as concerns about the U. S. Highway 17 construction near Wal-Mart. Mr. Kolman presented a report on his efforts to increase neighborhood participation in discussions on possible improvements to DeRenne Avenue.

### C. Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) and Transportation Staff

Mr. Wilkes stated that the TCC continued the approval of the proposed Intermodal Connector to the NHS system in order to obtain comments from the Georgia Ports Authority on the matter. There was also discussion of the LRTP update. Several meetings were scheduled to review the traffic model outputs and begin developing the project list for the LRTP Update.

## III. Public Comments on Action Items

Dr. Hair asked if there was anyone present with a question on the Action Items.

No one came forward.

## IV. ACTION ITEMS:

### A. Approval of February 25, 2004 CUTS Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Lansing **moved** to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2004 CUTS Policy Committee Meeting. Mr. Carter seconded the motion.

**Policy Committee Action:**       **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to approve the minutes of the February 25, 2004 as presented. Voting were Mr. Weitman, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Parker, Mr. Mundell, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Fidler, Mr. Lansing, Mr. Lamar, Mr. Carter, Mr. Brown, and Mr. Abolt.

**B. Approval of Final FY 2005 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Mr. Wilkes stated that the UPWP, which is the staff work program for the coming fiscal year, includes comments from the other CUTS Committees. Staff feels that this is a workable budget.

Mr. Mackey **moved** to approve the final FY 2005 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). Mr. Carter seconded the motion.

**Policy Committee Action:**       **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to approve the final FY 2005 Unified Planning Work Program. Voting were Mr. Abolt, Mr. Brown, Mr. Fidler, Mr. Carter, Mr. Lamar, Mr. Lansing, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Mundell, Mr. Parker, Mr. Simpson, and Mr. Weitman

**C. Approval of the proposed intermodal connector addition in Chatham County to the National Highway System (NHS)**

Mr. Weitman stated that the GPA is in support of this addition. It is the most appropriate way for Port Wentworth to obtain assistance to repair this roadway. The following minor wording changes were requested: change the wording of Savannah Ports Authority to Georgia Ports Authority; and include wording that would indicate that there are other waterfront users who would also use this connector addition.

Mr. Simpson stated that GDOT is comfortable with those changes.

Mr. Abolt **moved** to approve the proposed addition subject to the changes that were identified. Mr. Mundell seconded the motion.

**Policy Committee Action:**       **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to approve the proposed intermodal connector addition in Chatham County to the National Highway System (NHS) subject to the following minor changes in the wording: change the wording of Savannah Ports Authority to Georgia Ports Authority; and include wording that would indicate that there are other waterfront users who would also use this connector addition. Voting were Mr. Abolt, Mr. Brown, Mr. Carter, Mr. Lamar, Mr. Lansing, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Mundell, Mr. Fidler, Mr. Parker, Mr. Simpson, and Mr. Weitman.

**V. Status Reports**

A. Congestion Management System

Mr. Wilkes stated that staff has received the draft report on the Congestion Management System. Project Steering Committee meetings have been scheduled. It is anticipated that the comment period would end with the Steering Committee meetings. A Final Report should be available shortly thereafter.

B. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Mr. Wilkes stated that the Round One Public Meetings have been completed; three rounds of meetings have been scheduled. Staff is working diligently to meet the proposed June schedule.

C. East-West Corridor Study

Mr. Thomson stated that ten letters of interest were received on April 9, 2004. All of the responses were sufficient. Material has been distributed to the Review and Recommendation Committee. Letters will be sent to the short list of consultants by the beginning of next week. The final part of the selection process will be a presentation that has been tentatively scheduled for May 21, 2004. The study should be ready to proceed by the middle of June.

**VI. Informational Reports**

A. Georgia Department of Transportation.

Ms. Scott stated that the format of the status report has been changed this year to make it easier to read. She reviewed the status of projects on the report.

Mr. Abolt noted that there was no identification of the Jimmy DeLoach Parkway at its intersection with State Route 21. The County Engineer has been asked to look into this also.

B. Chatham County

Mr. Black reviewed the status of One-Percent Sales Tax Projects in Chatham County. A report was distributed at the meeting.

Mr. Abolt stated that the County is experiencing difficulty with acquiring right-of-way on Whitfield Avenue. This was discussed yesterday with Commissioner Linnenkohl.

Mr. Black added that for over 15 years the County has had a policy of early acquisition to remove hardship from people who are going to be impacted by roadway projects. The FHWA has brought up some things that have changed the process considerably.

**C. City of Savannah**

Mr. Weiner reviewed the status of projects that are underway in the City of Savannah.

Mr. Abolt asked whether the City was pleased with what was happening on Waters and Skidaway as a result of the opening of the next phase of the Truman Parkway.

Mr. Weiner replied that the City and the residents are pleased with the reductions in traffic on Skidaway and Waters Avenue.

Dr. Hair added that he travels Waters Avenue every morning. The Truman has made a huge difference on traffic on Waters Avenue.

Mr. Mackey asked the number of lanes that are proposed for the Gwinnett Street widening and what is the anticipated starting point.

Mr. Weiner replied that the proposal is to go for a four lane divided road and the segment is from the interchange of Interstate 16 to Stiles Avenue.

**E. Chatham Area Transit Authority**

Mr. Lansing stated that CAT has obtained approval from the Coast Guard to increase the capacity on the ferries and the noise level has been reduced by four to six decibels. CAT has approval to purchase a third vessel.

Mr. Lansing added that CAT continues to make progress toward the goal of 100 new bus shelters by June 30, 2004. To date, the project is approximately 75% complete. Also ten new buses will be ordered in November with delivery anticipated before the end of the year.

Ms. Wood asked if it determined that advertisements would be on the buses including the windows.

Mr. Lansing replied that the CAT Board made the determination several years ago that the advertising was a source of revenue for the bus system.

Ms. Wood asked if there were any plans to use advertising at the bus shelters.

Mr. Lansing replied that there are no such plans at this time.

F. Georgia Ports Authority

Mr. Weitman stated that the GPA is very close to entering into a PMA with DOT on the Brampton Road Connector.

G. Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport

Mr. Fidler replied that the southwest perimeter road is under construction. The road should be opening sometime this summer. Also general aviation taxiways and hangar sites are being designed for the southwest quadrant.

**VII. Other Business**

Mr. Thomson stated that staff is working on an update to the Transportation Improvement Program. The Long Range Transportation Plan Update is also nearing completion. Both items will be before the CUTS Committees in June. He thanked members of the Policy Committee for their staff who are contributing a lot of time on both of those projects over the next month or so.

Mr. Thomson added that a public notice for the TIP that is scheduled for April 22, 2004 was distributed in the pre-meeting material. A revised meeting schedule was included in materials for this meeting. Members were asked to adjust their calendars.

Finally, Mr. Thomson stated that Governor Perdue announced a 15.5 billion dollar transportation plan called Fast Forward. It appears as though there is an advancement of 4 ½ billion dollars for local projects. Staff is working with GDOT to identify the local benefits of that. Early reports indicate that most of the local funds will be used for the Interstate system.

Mr. Mackey commended GDOT and all the county governments that were involved with the opening of the Pooler Parkway.

Dr. Hair added that Commissioner Linnenkohl has done an outstanding job for many, many years for GDOT. In his position as Commissioner, he has been helpful to Chatham County in terms of getting projects completed

Mr. Abolt stated that the CUTS meetings are more informative than in the past, due largely to the work of Mr. Thomson, MPC Executive Director. Mr. Thomson has made a major impact in just a few short weeks in the job.

#### **4. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the April 21, 2004, Policy Committee meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

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