



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

**POLICY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

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

November 18, 2004

10:00 A.M.

Voting Members

Representing

Present

Russ Abolt	Chatham County	x
Michael Brown	City of Savannah	
Ltc. Jeffrey J. Goble	Hunter Army Airfield	
Patrick S. Graham	Savannah Airport Commission	
Billy Hair	Chatham County, Chair	x
Tim Holbrook	City of Port Wentworth	
William W. Hubbard	Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce	
James Hungerpillar	Town of Vernonburg	
Otis Johnson	City of Savannah	
Tom Lamar	Chairman, ACAT	
Mike Lamb	City of Pooler	
Scott Lansing	Chatham Area Transit Authority	
Harold Linnenkohl	GDOT	
Timothy S. Mackey	Chairman, MPC	x
Doug J. Marchand	Georgia Ports Authority	
Lee Mundell	Chairman, CAC	x
Walter Parker	City of Tybee Island	x
James A. Petrea	Town of Thunderbolt	
Andy Quinney	City of Garden City	
Joe Murray Rivers	CAT Board of Directors	
Ben A. Rozier	City of Bloomingdale	
Eric R. Winger	Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA)	

Voting Member Alternates

Representing

Present

Tom Cannon	City of Garden city	x
George Fidler, P.E.	Savannah Airport Commission	x
Matthew Fowler	GDOT – Atlanta	x
Jean Iaderosa	Chatham Area Transit Authority	
Peter Shonka, P. E.	City of Savannah	x
Trip Tollison	Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce	x
Randy Weitman	Georgia Ports Authority	

Others Present:

Allan Black
Betty Carter
Pete Liakakis
Keith Melton
Theresa Scott
Thomas Thomson, P.E., AICP
Mike Weiner, P. E.
Robert Wilder
Mark Wilkes, PE, AICP
Wykoda Wang

Representing:

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

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 distributed.

II. Committee Reports (verbal)

A. Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Ms. Wang stated that during the recent meeting, ACAT reviewed the same items that appear on the Policy Committee agenda. There were no additional comments or concerns.

B. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Wilkes stated that the CAC reviewed the information items that are before the Policy Committee at this meeting. Mr. Lansing, Executive Director of Chatham Area Transit Authority, informed the CAC on the status of the proposed transfer center.

C. Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC)

Mr. Wilkes stated that the TCC reviewed the information items that are before the Policy Committee at this meeting.

III. Public Comments on Action Items

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

No one came forward.

IV. ACTION ITEM:

A. Approval of September 22, 2004 CUTS Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Abolt **moved** to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2004 CUTS Policy Committee Meeting. Mr. Mackey seconded the motion.

Policy Committee Action: **The motion carried with none opposed.** The motion was to approve the minutes of the September 22, 2004 Policy Committee Meeting as presented. Voting were Mr. Shonka, Mr. Fidler, Mr. Cannon, Mr. Mackey, Mr. Abolt, Mr. Parker, Mr. Fowler, and Mr. Tollison. Mr. Mundell was not in the room when the vote was taken.

V. Information Items

A. TCC Bylaw change to add a voting representative from the Coastal Georgia RDC

Mr. Wilkes stated that at the recent meeting, the TCC approved a change in the Bylaws which would include the Planning Director of the Coastal Georgia Regional Development Center as a voting member of the TCC. Mr. Paul Smith, Planning Director of the Coastal Georgia RDC, has attended two previous TCC meetings.

B. Draft FY 2006 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Wilkes stated that the UPWP is the staff work program for the next fiscal year, which will begin on July 1, 2005. A copy of the draft document was included in the pre-meeting materials. A proposed final document would be available in April.

C. Connecting Savannah

Mr. Thomson provided an overview of the activities related to the Connecting Savannah process. Much of the information was included in a Press Kit, which was distributed to all Policy Committee members. An initial Stakeholder Conference was held at the Coastal Georgia Center. There were over 75 neighborhood and business representatives in attendance. Five working groups were formed at that initial meeting. Break-out sessions were held so that smaller groups could address issues pertaining to transportation issues in Savannah. Detailed responses are included in the Press Kits. It is anticipated that all future meetings related to Connecting Savannah would be held in the Coastal Georgia Center.

Mr. Mackey asked who would be the decision makers as this effort moves forward.

Mr. Thomson replied that this is a collaborative effort. However the process would end with projects that would address the issues that are raised by the participants. These projects would go into the MPO process at some point. The projects would be brought before the Policy Committee for further discussion and approved for either the Long Range Plan or the Transportation Improvement Program in context with other projects that are on-going and are planned.

Dr. Hair stated that his concern is that the final product could come out with no representation of regionalization. Have regional people been invited to these planning meetings?

It was the consensus of other Policy Committee members to bring the appropriate representatives from other areas to the planning process.

Mr. Thomson stated that he would reach out to the neighboring counties. He added that a primary set of outcomes would be presented to the Policy Committee during the April meeting.

D. Chatham County Intermodal Freight Study

In the absence of a representative from the Georgia Ports Authority, Mr. Wilkes stated that the current study is a continuation of the study that concluded in 1998. The first Steering Committee and Technical Coordinating Committee meetings have been held. Initial Public Meetings have also been held. The consultant is continuing to collect data. Comments from the City of Savannah about Bay Street have been received.

To a question from Mr. Cannon, Mr. Wilkes replied that he would confirm the name of the consultants and provide that information to Mr. Cannon following the conclusion of the Policy Committee meeting.

E. GDOT Interstate Improvement Study

Mr. Fowler stated that GDOT has received two funding amounts to be used to study the interstate system within Chatham County, specifically, I-16 and I-95 to reconstruct the cloverleaf at that interchange and to look at I-16 and SR 307/Dean Forest Road. The State has added other funds to look at interchanges and possible necessary improvements. There might be some overlap between the two interchanges and along the routes that intersect the interstate. The proposals would be due around the first of the year and commence the study in spring of 2005. There would be a public involvement process that would utilize the CAC.

Dr. Hair stated that the interchange of State Route 204 and Interstate 95 should be included in that study. This may be more serious than SR 307/Dean Forest Road and Interstate 16.

Mr. Fowler replied that this interchange would be included.

Mr. Abolt added that this item would be discussed during a meeting with Chairman Linnenkohl when he is in Savannah next week.

Mr. Melton noted that the statewide interstate plan identified an improvement for I-95 and State Route 204.

V. Informational Reports

A. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Scott reviewed the status of projects that are underway in the area. A report was distributed at the meeting.

Dr. Hair asked for clarification on the way in which Project #51, Burns Parkway, from SR119/Effingham to SR30/Chatham would be related to the Savannah River Parkway through Effingham County.

Ms. Scott replied that the project would take some traffic off of State Route 21 and then tie back to State Route 21.

Mr. Abolt asked about Project #46, Islands Expressway from General McIntosh Blvd. to Truman Parkway. The MPC approved a General Development Plan on this project. He asked that everything that is proceeding would be part of that planning effort. Also, there is a problem with the off-ramp of Truman Parkway on to East Victory Drive near the former K-mart, soon-to-be Home Depot. The problem will worsen within the next six months.

Mr. Weiner replied that this is a valid concern. The City has developed a plan to create dual left-turn lanes coming from the Truman headed north and east on Victory Drive. DOT agreed to join with the City to develop the total project.

Ms. Scott thanked Dr. Hair on behalf of the District for the service that he has provided.

Dr. Hair replied that if he had to list one thing in his past eight years that he worked very hard on but brought great benefit to the County was his relationship with GDOT. He appreciates very much what GDOT has done for Chatham County.

Mr. Abolt added his acknowledgement what Dr. Hair has done. Dr. Hair has been our embedded activist for this county for many years.

B. Chatham County

Mr. Black reviewed the One-Percent Sales Tax projects in the county. A report was distributed at the meeting.

Mr. Abolt stated that the county has had less than acceptable performance from the contractor on the Stephenson Avenue project. The contractor will be in a penalty situation as of Friday, November 19, 2004.

Dr. Hair commented that Ms. Stone has been instrumental in moving the Roadway Amenity issue forward. Ms. Stone is Commissioner-elect for the First District. Her term will start in January.

C. City of Savannah

Mr. Weiner reviewed the status of projects currently underway in the City of Savannah. A report was distributed at the meeting.

Dr. Hair asked for additional information on the traffic calming initiative in Paradise Park.

Mr. Weiner described the efforts in detail. There is a 90-day trial period before a permanent resolution.

Mr. Mackey asked if the City plans to meet with residents on the Gwinnett Street widening project.

Mr. Weiner replied that as soon as concept plans are ready to review, the neighborhood would be involved.

D. Savannah Hilton Head International Airport

Mr. Fidler indicated that passenger parking numbers are setting record rates. However, this has resulted in congestion problems. A contract has been proposed to redesign traffic signals and ramps to alleviate the traffic.

VII. Other Business

Dr. Hair shared comments upon leaving office after eight years. Success in transportation issues is one special accomplishment of which he is very proud.

Mr. Thomson stated that Policy Committee members should be receiving official copies of the TIP and the LRTP. These documents were recently approved by the Governor.

Mr. Mundell thanked the Policy Committee for asking that Mr. Lansing address the CAC on the topic of the proposed transfer center. Committee members appreciated the opportunity to ask questions of Mr. Lansing on this important community issue.

VIII. Other Public Comments

Dr. Hair asked if there was anyone else in the audience with a comment on any transportation issue.

No one came forward.

IX. Adjournment

There being no further business, the November 18, 2004, Policy Committee meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

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