



CHATHAM URBAN TRANSPORTATION STUDY

**POLICY COMMITTEE
MEETING SUMMARY**

October 26, 2005

10:00 A.M.

Voting Members

Russ Abolt
Michael Brown
LTC Carl Coffman
Patric S. Graham
Tim Holbrook
William W. Hubbard
James Hungerpilller
Otis Johnson
Tom Lamar
Mike Lamb
Pete Liakakis
Harold Linnenkohl
Stephen R. Lufburrow
Doug J. Marchand
Lee Mundell
Carl Palmer
Walter Parker
James A. Petrea
Andy Quinney
Representative
Ben A. Rozier
Eric R. Winger

Representing

Chatham County
City of Savannah
Hunter Army Airfield
Savannah Airport Commission
City of Port Wentworth
Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
Town of Vernonburg
City of Savannah
Chairman, ACAT
City of Pooler
Chairman Chatham County Commission
GDOT
Chairman, MPC
Georgia Ports Authority
Chairman, CAC
Chatham Area Transit Authority
City of Tybee Island
Town of Thunderbolt
City of Garden City
CAT Board of Directors
City of Bloomingdale
Savannah Economic Development
Authority (SEDA)

Present

X

X
X
X
X

X
X
X

Voting Member Alternates

Tom Cannon
George Fidler, P.E.
Peter Shonka, P. E.
Radney Simpson
Trip Tollison
Randy Weitman, P.E.
Charles Lively

Representing

City of Garden City
Savannah Airport Commission
City of Savannah
GDOT – Atlanta
Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce
Georgia Ports Authority
City of Port Wentworth

Present

X

X
X

X
X

<u>Others Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Allan Black, P.E.	Chatham County	x
Keith Melton	GDOT – Atlanta	x
Teresa Scott	GDOT – Jesup	x
Thomas Thomson, P.E., AICP	MPC Executive Director	x
Wykoda Wang	MPO Staff	x
Mike Weiner, P. E.	City of Savannah	x
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP	MPO Staff	x

Call to Order

Mr. Liakakis called the October 26, 2005 Policy Committee Meeting to order and welcomed Mr. Carl Palmer, new Executive Director for Chatham Area Transit. He announced Mr. Radney Simpson alternate for Georgia Department of Transportation and stated Mayor Johnson would be detained. He called Mr. Thomson to speak on the awards received by the Metropolitan Planning Commission.

Mr. Thomson made brief statements regarding the two awards awarded to the Metropolitan Planning Organization. The first award was given from the Georgia Planners Association for the Connecting Savannah Project and the second award was the Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations Award for Outstanding Professional Achievement in Metropolitan Transportation Planning for Metropolitan Planning Organizations larger than two hundred thousand people. He also thanked the project teams of Wilbur Smith & Associates, Dovetail Associates, and McMillan & Associates and the staff support from Mark Wilkes and Wykoda Wang.

I. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Abolt **moved** to approve the agenda that has been distributed to the members. Mr. Parker seconded the motion.

Policy Committee Action: The motion to approve the agenda carried with none opposed. Voting in favor of the motion was: Mr. Lamb, Mr. Lively, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Cannon, Mayor Johnson, Chairman Liakakis, Mr. Abolt, Mr. Parker, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Weitman, Mr. Mundell and Mr. Lamar.

II. Committee Reports (verbal)

A. Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Mr. Lamar thanked Chairman Liakakis for his support of the ACAT Committee. He gave a brief report of the action items endorsed by the ACAT Committee. The ACAT Committee endorsed the TIP amendment to advance the Truman Parkway Interchange Lightning project from 2008 to 2006. The Committee also requested that ADA considerations be adhered to regarding the Transportation Enhancement applications and that the design of curb cuts, rails and crossings are designed right at the first stage of these projects. Mr.

Lamar stated the Committee is also in the process of completing its bylaws update as far as the composition of the Committee. Several members and/or agencies have resigned; therefore, ACAT is in the process of contacting these entities to regain membership.

B. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Mundell reported that Latoya Jones, Community Planner of the Federal Highway Administration, gave a presentation to the Citizens Advisory Committee on the basic structure and work products of the MPO and how all the components work together. All the action items were approved from the October 20, 2005 CAC meeting including the approval of the Revised CUTS Public Involvement Plan.

C. Technical Coordinating Committee

Mr. Wilkes reported all action items were endorsed at the TCC meeting on October 20, 2005 to the Policy Committee.

III. Action Items

A. Approval of the June 22, 2005 Policy Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Abolt **moved** to approve the June 22, 2005 Policy Committee meeting minutes. Mr. Parker seconded the motion.

Policy Committee Action: The motion to approve the June 22, 2005 Policy Committee meeting minutes carried with none opposed. Voting in favor of the motion was: Mr. Lamb, Mr. Lively, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Cannon, Mayor Johnson, Chairman Liakakis, Mr. Abolt, Mr. Parker, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Weitman, Mr. Mundell and Mr. Lamar.

B. Approval of Amendment to FY 2006 – 2008 Transportation Improvement Program: Truman Parkway Interchange Lighting

Ms. Wang indicated that this was a safety project and was identified as a priority project in the FY 2006-2008 TIP development process. However, at that time no funding was secured. In August 2005, GDOT identified funding for this project so it can be moved forward from 2008 to 2006.

Mr. Lamar **moved** to approve the TIP amendment to advance the Truman Parkway Interchange Lighting project from 2008 to 2006. Mayor Johnson seconded the motion.

Policy Committee Action: The motion to approve the TIP amendment to advance the Truman Parkway Interchange Lighting project from 2008 to 2006 carried with none opposed. Voting in favor of the motion was: Mr. Lamb, Mr. Lively, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Cannon, Mayor Johnson, Chairman Liakakis, Mr. Abolt, Mr. Parker, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Weitman, Mr. Mundell and Mr. Lamar.

C. Approval of Chatham County TE Priorities

Mr. Wilkes reported that GDOT accepted applications for funding for the next 2 years for the Transportation Enhancement Projects. There were six applications submitted in Chatham County: 1) AASU Bicycle/Pedestrian Path, 2) Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd Streetscape Phase 2 Improvements, 3) Pooler Sidewalk Extension, 4) Rehabilitation of Paint Shop Building's Sawtooth Roof, 5) Savannah State University Marsh Front Multi-Purpose Path and 6) Tybrisa Street Streetscape Improvement. He further reported the TE funding trends show that Chatham County has not been receiving its fair share of TE funding based on population. TE Funding has steadily declined since 2000 resulting in a funding gap of \$2.3 million. Mr. Wilkes noted that the staff recommendation is to initiate a dialog with our Transportation Board Members to encourage increased TE funding.

Mr. Abolt **moved** to authorize Chairman Liakakis, Mr. Thomson, and several other MPO Members to speak with Rayburn Anderson from Statesboro and Roy Harrington from Baxley, GA concerning the Transportation Enhancement Projects. Mr. Parker seconded the motion.

Policy Committee Action: The motion to authorize the Chairman and the Executive Director with several MPO Members to speak to Rayburn Anderson and Roy Harrington regarding the gap in funding for the Transportation Enhancement Projects carried with none opposed. Voting in favor was: Mr. Lamb, Mr. Lively, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Cannon, Mayor Johnson, Chairman Liakakis, Mr. Abolt, Mr. Parker, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Weitman, Mr. Mundell and Mr. Lamar.

D. Approval of Revised CUTS Public Involvement Plan

Ms. Wang gave a brief report on the revisions to the Public Involvement Plan. The revised plan incorporated measures of effectiveness (MOEs), additions and corrections to the neighborhood contact list, and updated administrative changes, i.e., meeting locations and meeting times. The CAC endorsed the Revised Public Involvement Plan.

Mr. Abolt **moved** to approve the Revised CUTS Public Involvement Plan. Mr. Mundell seconded the motion.

Policy Committee Action: The motion to approve the Revised CUTS Public Involvement Plan carried with none opposed. Voting in favor was: Mr. Lamb, Mr. Lively, Mr. Palmer, Mr. Cannon, Mayor Johnson, Chairman Liakakis, Mr. Abolt, Mr. Parker, Mr. Simpson, Mr. Weitman, Mr. Mundell and Mr. Lamar.

IV. Status Reports

A. TEA-21 Reauthorization

Mr. Wilkes gave a brief highlight of a few changes that SAFETEA-LU would have on the MPO, including: 1) The MPO will received increased funding due to increases in the

minimum guaranteed return; 2) The TMA certification has been extended from 3 to 4 years; and 3) the TIP is required to be updated every four years.

B. Chatham County Intermodal Freight Study

Mr. Weitman referred the Board Members to their packets for a summary of the report. He stated the numerous changes within CSX Railroad are the primary causes of delay in the completion of this project. He stated as soon as an agreement is made with CSX, he anticipates the completion of the project.

C. GDOT Interstate Improvement Study

Mr. Simpson stated the Georgia Department of Transportation and the consultants are currently reviewing their contract, therefore he anticipates an agreement by both parties soon.

D. CAT Downtown Transit Station Study

Mr. Palmer stated on October 1, 2005 members of the Chatham Area Transit Authority Board and citizens had a public meeting to get further input on the design of the Transit Center. The Chatham Area Transit Authority Board solicited Request for Qualifications and Proposals. The Federal Transit Administration must concur with the design and the acquisition of the site or funding will not be provided.

E. Transportation Amenities Plan

Mr. Wilkes stated that staff is currently working on the Request for Proposals (RFP) for phase 2 of the project to develop design guidelines for new road construction projects in the county. This is one of 5 RFPs staff has been working on recently. As soon as the requests are out, staff will move forward with the project.

V. Informational Reports (verbal)

A. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Scott gave a brief summary on the status of a few of the GDOT / Chatham County Projects. I-16 bridge shoulder widening over I-516 & Stiles Avenue has been let. The low bidder is TIC. Projects 4, 5, 6, and 7 are 4 intersections along Abercorn Street where the right of way is being acquired and is scheduled for letting next year. Gwinnett Street from Stiles Avenue to I-16 is a new project that GDOT has agreed to contribute funding to the construction, so a draft to project management agreement will go to the city as soon as possible. Route 21 Ocean Highway Bridge over Norfolk Southern Railroad is being processed. The widening of US 80 to Tybee Island has shown both opposition and favor from the residents of the island in a recent public meeting. The staff is now in the process of combining the comments and getting answers out to everyone. The last 2 projects are going to be let to consultants. I-95 at SR 204 /Abercorn Street has been let. SR 204 from

CR 803 / Fort Argyle Road to CR 770/ Old River Road -this project will realign the curve. GDOT has held a public information open house for the Diamond Causeway widening project and has received an approved draft environmental document. Georgia Department of Transportation will move forward with this project. Ms Scott added that there is a new project that has not been added to the program. That project is the widening of Grange Road in Port Wentworth. This is a long-range project.

Mr. Abolt voiced his concerns regarding US 17 widening. He stated there have been numerous complaints from this area; the County is not quite sure of a completion date and the contractor is months behind schedule. The County is considering taking legal actions against the contractor.

Chairman Liakakis questioned the reasons for GDOT delay in taking legal actions against this company. He stated there have been several accidents in the area and considerable road rage which makes this area very unsafe. There is a tentative date of March 6, 2006 for completion. However, if the Georgia Department of Transportation seeks legal action and finds the company in default thereby having to hire another construction company, when will this project be completed?

Ms. Scott's response was that there are very strict guidelines that must be adhered to. If the company is put in default GDOT will have to speak with a surety company and this company in turn will be responsible for hiring another contractor to do the work.

Chairman Liakakis requested to be kept informed on a weekly basis as to the status of this project. This information should be sent directly to his office.

Mr. Mundell stated in the event there is another contractor that requires additional input, he would like to have expressed to that contractor the concerns surrounding the Wal Mart intersection and would like to have it scheduled as top priority.

B. Chatham County

Mr. Black gave a brief review on the status report of the One Percent Sales Tax Chatham County Roadway Improvement Program. There was a period for comments and questions.

Mr. Thomson added in response to Mayor Johnson's request that the Goody-Clancy Study for West Savannah and the Bay Street widening project be coordinated, a ten-person tele-conference was held to identify some of the follow-up issues. These issues were mostly related to sidewalks and bicycle facilities.

C. City of Savannah

Mr. Weiner gave a brief review of the status on the Traffic Engineering Improvement Projects. The projects were 1) Henry Street and Anderson Street Signal System, 2) Gwinnett Street Widening, 3) LaRoche Avenue Widening 4) Traffic Signal Installations at

MLK Jr. Blvd. at McDonough Street, and 5) Signal Upgrades (installation of light-emitting diode modules). He explained the technology of the Light emitting diode module for the benefit of those that were not familiar with this relatively new technology. He stated this new signal upgrade does not consume as much electricity as the incandescent bulb and the cost of this bulb is estimated at about \$35.00 compared to its predecessor's \$130.00-140.00 per month. There is also a drastic reduction in energy consumption and the LED also comes with a ten-year guarantee.

D. Chatham Area Transit Authority

Mr. Palmer gave a brief status report on the Transportation Development Plan. He stated the primary focus of this plan is to conduct a marketing plan on how best to encourage people to use transit as an alternative to the automobile. The second focus is operational size where currently Transit has ten (10) buses on order. These buses will be available for service in June 2006. Teleride has on order 8 transit vehicles for persons with disabilities availability for service in February 2006.

E. Georgia Ports Authority

Mr. Weitman gave a brief update on the status of GDOT Chatham County Projects SR 307 overpass over new Ports Authority Rail line and Brampton Road Connector from Foundation Drive to SR 25/SR21. He stated staff is working towards moving forward with both projects by the end of the year.

H. Other

Mr. Thomson announced, thanks to Mark Wilkes and Wykoda Wang, the MPO is now posting all agendas and package material regularly mailed out on the MPC Webpage. This will allow Board Members and other Committee Members to receive their agenda packages early.

IV. Adjournment

There being no other business to come before the Board, the October 26, 2005 Policy Committee meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted

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