
<u>Others Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Michael Adams	MPO Staff	X
Melvin Brown	Wilber Smith Associates	X
Glenn Durrence		X
Jessica Hagan	MPO Staff	X
Jane Love	MPO Staff	X
Sarah Rayfield	CAT	X
Brad Saxon	GDOT	X
Teresa Scott	GDOT	X
Barbara Settzo	for MPO	X
Thomas Thomson, P.E., AICP	MPC Executive Director	X
Wykoda Wang	MPO Staff	X
Julie Yawn	MPC Staff	X

Call to Order

Chairman Pete Liakakis called the meeting to order.

I. Approval of Agenda

It was moved and seconded to approve the agenda.

CORE Board Action: the motion to approve the agenda for the October 26, 2011 meeting carried with none opposed.

II. Committee Reports

A. Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Ms. Jane Love reported that the ACAT committee did not have a quorum. Those present heard informational reports from Teleride and CAT.

B. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Mark Egan reported that the Citizens Advisory Committee had no action items on the agenda. He reported that the committee is concerned about visibility issues at the I-16 & I-516 interchange, although excessive removal of trees is not wanted. They intend to draft a letter.

C. Technical Coordinating Committee

Mr. Tom Thomson reported that the Technical Coordinating Committee had no action items on the agenda.

D. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Thomson reported that action items that were originally scheduled for this meeting have

been postponed until December. Regarding the action for Long Range Plan Amendments, issues with the financial plan need to be resolved before action can be taken by this board. Regarding action on US 80 Bridges Study, Tybee Island officials requested a delay in selecting a recommended alternative for the US 80 bridges until one more presentation can be made to the community. Staff is providing the MPO Board with an update today for information, but not for action.

He reported on news from Washington which included dates and spending bills that could impact transportation projects in our area.

On a state level, he reported that they received the official letter certifying that all the Round Tables have acted. The next step is education and promotion and then the July vote.

III. Action Items

A. Approval of the August 24, 2011 CORE MPO Board Meeting Minutes

It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes of the August 24, 2011 CORE MPO Board Meeting.

CORE Board Action: the motion to accept the minutes of the August 24, 2011 CORE MPO Board Meeting carried with none opposed.

IV. Other Business

No other business at this time.

V. Status Reports

A. Selection of the Preferred Alternative in the US 80 Bridges Replacement Study

Ms. Jane Love started by reviewing how previous concepts, addressing capacity, in this segment of US 80, had once been funded in the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), but that in the more recent adoption of the plan, the four-lane widening concept was among the projects removed from the funded part of the Plan because the MPO had to balance the decrease in expected funding to the area with increases in the costs of all projects. The reason the widening was among the projects that were cut was that the amount of future traffic demand on this part of US 80 is controversial, environmental impacts would be significant, and much funding was tied up in all of that uncertainty. However, the adopted Long Range Transportation Plan does fund bridge replacement projects in the segment because the MPO had understood that the message from the community was that safety improvement on the bridges could not wait indefinitely for funding. Therefore the current study primarily is about safety improvements, rather than capacity.

Mr. Melvin Brown, from Wilbur Smith Associates, reported on the recommended alternative in the US 80 Bridges Replacement Study. He reported that they have completed the analysis of the issues, development of alternatives, and evaluation of alternatives. Now it is time to identify the study's recommended alternative.

Mr. Brown reviewed the six end-to-end alternatives for this six-mile stretch of US 80 from Bull River Bridge to Lazaretto Creek Bridge. He explained the evaluation criteria and highlighted the matrix of scores for all six alternatives. The top three alternatives were #3, #4 and #5, with the recommended alternative being #3. At this time Mr. Brown reviewed Alternative #3 in detail which calls for new 2-lane bridges with 10-foot shoulders on either side and one multi-use path protected by a barrier. In addition to bridge improvements it also includes a 10-foot shoulder for the roadway between the bridges, right-turn lanes and left-turn lanes at Fort Pulaski and at the trailhead access, and a paved parking facility for the McQueen's Trail.

The next steps are: 1) a public meeting; 2) a final report; 3) an update to the Long Range Transportation Plan and the Transportation Improvement Program, and 4) transition the project to GDOT.

Mr. Patrick Shay asked if the current elevation of the roadway would be raised as part of this alternative. Mr. Brown confirmed that the surface of the road will be raised above the level of tidal concerns at the same time that shoulders are added. Mr. Thomson noted that they will work with scientists concerning the issue of rising sea level. On the issue of mass evacuations or other emergencies, Mr. Thomson explained that wide shoulders throughout are designed to provide options for motorists and officials in either instance. Mr. Shay expressed doubt that funding will be available for the entire project and asked if the costs of the road versus bridges are separated so that some improvements could proceed before others, if need be. Mr. Thomson confirmed that cost estimates exist for each element of the end-to-end alternatives and also noted that the Transportation Investment Act may add some funding to this project.

B. SR 204 Corridor Study Update

Mr. Michael Adams reported that a stakeholder and public meeting was held on September 12, 2011 offering three alternatives. Another stakeholder meeting occurred on October 7, 2011. A third meeting will be in 2012.

VI. Agency Reports

A. Georgia Department of Transportation

Ms. Teresa Scott reported on the following projects:

#1 – Jimmy DeLoach Pkway Ext – is on schedule for letting next month

#2 – Signal installation in Pooler – on schedule for December letting

#5 - King George Interchange – tentative date for public hearing in December

#10 – operational improvement at Gulfstream Rd. GDOT has met with Gulfstream and presented options. They are waiting for Gulfstream response. Mr. Liakakis expressed his concern about the slow pace of improvements for Gulfstream.

#21 – operational improvement, finalizing plans, expect construction to begin early next year.

#25 – new project programmed for operational improvements at Airways Ave.

Questions from the board included:

#14 – CR 302/Montgomery Cross Rd. at Casey Canal – Ms. Scott explained that this replacement project is at a standstill over right-of-way. City funding of the right-of-way is the issue.

#37 – Lighting at I-19 & I-16 interchange. Mr. Thomson reported that GDOT is ready to go but there is no funding agreement between the County, Savannah, Garden City, and Pooler. Pooler no longer sees any benefit. They are paying the lighting at Pooler Parkway instead. Mr. Liakakis asked that staff coordinate a meeting between the four entities to come up with an agreement. Operational expenses are estimated by GDOT at \$1,000/month. Mr. Brian Johnson, of Garden City, mentioned that remaining issues to be resolved are: 1) sharing of future escalating energy costs, and 2) sharing of maintenance costs. Mr. Shay noted that the full use of lighting technology could reduce the operating costs. Ms. Scott will ask GDOT designers about the lighting technology that is being used for this project.

B. Liberty County Projects

Mr. Sonny Timmerman reported that they are working with local governments to come up with a list of local projects for the 25% portion of the TIA revenue. They are also focusing on educating the citizens of Liberty and Long counties about how the 75% portion and the 25% portion will be spent.

C. Chatham County

No report at this time.

D. City of Savannah

Mr. Mike Weiner reported on two projects. Construction of a noise barrier on west DeRenne Ave. from Montgomery St. westward is a new project. They are working with residents in regard to necessary easements. Expect to start construction in February 2012. The other project is DeRenne Ave. PE phase, including environmental, has begun. Meetings with GDOT are underway. Work on the concept design will begin soon.

The last phase of upgrading the downtown traffic controller system will begin shortly and be completed next year. This affects the area north of Gaston St.

E. Chatham Area Transit

Ms. Sarah Rayfield reported that CAT has launched new and updated routes. Ridership was up for 22% in September. They are working on the passenger amenities guidelines. They

are also developing service standards policy. Mr. Egan asked how difficult it is to re-direct bus transit to construction sites as they develop. Mr. Reese explained what was involved in making these changes.

F. Georgia Ports Authority

Mr. Randy Weitman reported on progress on the SR307 overpass. They are also talking with GDOT on expansion of the Mason Intermodal Center, tied in with the completion of the overpass. The Norfolk Southern “wye” project that is under construction should be complete by the end of 2011.

G. Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport

Mr. George Fidler reported that Gulfstream expansion has begun on the new building. Airfield expansion connected with Gulfstream is also progressing.

VII. Other Public Comments

No public comments at this time.

VIII. Announcements

The next meeting will be December 14, 2011.

IX. Non-agenda items

Mr. Chad Reese requested that the transit capital project in the Transportation Investment Act regional project list be amended to say “Capital” and not limited to “Buses.” Mr. Thomson said MPO staff was told it had already been changed. He will check to be sure it is changed in the document.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business the October 26, 2011 CORE Board meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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