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<u>Regional Coordination Guest</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Sonny Timmerman	Liberty County	X
<u>Others Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Michael Adams	MPO Staff	X
Leon Davenport	Chatham County	X
Linda Fig	Fig Engineering	X
Jessica Hagan	MPO Staff	X
M. Leto		X
Jane Love	MPO Staff	X
Kaycee Mertz	GDOT	X
Brad Saxon	GDOT	X
Barbara Settzo	for MPO	X
Grady Smith	Jacobs Engineering	X
Thomas Thomson, P.E., AICP	MPC Executive Director	X
Wykoda Wang	MPO Staff	X
Mark Wilkes, P.E., AICP	MPC Transportation Director	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 April 25, 2012 meeting carried with none opposed.**

#### **II. Committee Reports**

##### **A. Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation**

Ms. Jane Love reported that the committee endorsed all the action items and discussed the Teleride service.

##### **B. Citizens Advisory Committee**

Mr. Mark Egan reported that the committee endorsed all the action items.

##### **C. Technical Coordinating Committee**

Mr. Mark Wilkes reported that the committee endorsed all the action items coming before the board today.

#### **D. Executive Director's Report**

Mr. Tom Thomson reported that Congress has extended the Surface Transportation Act again until June 30, 2012. Both chambers are currently developing a new bill. Because of uncertainty about the Act, funding contracts with GDOT after July 1 may only be for 75% of the formula. At this time, he is not concerned.

Mr. Thomson reminded the committee that it is three months until the vote on the Transportation Investment Act (TIA). Information presented to the public will be critical, especially about projects local governments wish to fund with the 25% allotment. This should probably be out to the public by June 1<sup>st</sup>. CAT also is included in this.

The new census-driven urbanized area boundaries have been announced. Our urbanized area is now reaching into Richmond Hill in Bryan County and into parts of Effingham County. The make-up of this CORE MPO board may be changing in the future.

The Governor has appointed Toby Carr as new planning director at GDOT. Todd Long is now Deputy Commissioner.

Mr. Thomson deferred to Mr. Brian Johnson of Garden City to report on progress with the I-95/I-16 lighting project. Mr. Johnson reported one remaining issue remains, that of ownership of the lights once they are installed. Upon an official response from legal counsel stating that local governments can own the lights once they are installed, this should be resolved.

Mr. Liakakis asked Mr. Thomson to send out a reminder to all parties about the June 1<sup>st</sup> deadline to educate the public about the 25% funding portion from the TIA. He emphasized how important it is that a positive message be shared with all our citizens. It was noted that opposition to the Transportation Investment Act (TIA) is developing in some parts of the region.

Mr. Thomson reported that the TIP amendment request was removed from the agenda because of a change in that item. He assured the committee that staff will work with the county to include the Jimmy DeLoach projects in the TIP.

### **III. Action Items**

#### **A. Approval of the February 22, 2012 CORE MPO Board Meeting Minutes**

It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes of the February 22, 2012 CORE MPO Board Meeting.

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**CORE Board Action: the motion to accept the minutes of the February 22, 2012 CORE MPO Board Meeting carried with none opposed.**

**B. Resolution of Appreciation for John R. Bennett, Jr., former chairman of the CORE MPO Citizens Advisory Committee**

It was moved and seconded to approve the resolution of appreciation for John R. Bennett, Jr., former chairman of the CORE MPO Citizens Advisory Committee. In the absence of Mr. Bennett, Mr. Mark Egan, the current chairman of the Citizens Advisory Committee, accepted the plaque on behalf of Mr. Bennett.

**CORE Board Action: the motion to approve the resolution of appreciation for John R. Bennett, Jr., former chairman of the CORE MPO Citizens Advisory Committee carried with none opposed.**

**C. Adoption of the FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program**

Mr. Wilkes reported that the FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program is the MPO staff work program and budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2012. This program includes continuation of studies already underway, as well as standard operating programs and processes. Key new studies for FY 2013 include the Streetcar Feasibility Study, the Regional Park and Ride Study, the Regional TCC.

It was moved and seconded to adopt the FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program as presented.

**CORE Board Action: the motion to adopt the FY 2013 Unified Planning Work Program as presented carried with none opposed.**

**D. Approval of proposed 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan Amendments for various projects**

Mr. Thomson read the following opening statement into the record.

“The CORE MPO is responsible for transportation planning within the Chatham County area. The MPO insures federal spending on transportation for urbanized area of over 50,000 people occurs through a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing process involving the public and a wide range of agencies and policy makers. The 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan serves as a guide for comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing transportation planning throughout Chatham County. The purpose of the plan is to identify existing and anticipated transportation problems and proposed solutions that are both fiscally feasible and supportive of community aspirations.”

Ms. Wykoda Wang reviewed the process for amending the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). She outlined the steps, the requirements, and the assumptions necessary in order to include these amended projects in the LRTP.

Ms. Wang proceeded to describe the specific project amendments in the following categories: New Projects, Stream-lined Projects, Revised Scope Projects, Revised Schedule Projects, and Other Project shifts.

These amended projects also include amended cost revisions to ensure each cost band is fiscally balanced. Overages or deficiencies in one cost band can be balanced with the same in the other two cost bands. When making these cost revisions, they considered inflation factors, over-estimates, and under-estimates.

During discussion, Mr. George Fidler asked if there was any risk that we would lose extra funds in a cost band and not be able to roll it to another band. Mr. Thomson replied that there were too many variables in the estimates and in the law to definitively answer the question.

Ms. Wang reviewed the public comments gathered to date on these amendments. Comments expressed concern about project cost estimates, project funding sources, project description, project status, "complete streets" incorporation, and non-motorized project funding.

Mr. Patrick Shay advocated for inclusion of the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal in the LRTP. He suggested a more favorable name be selected for this project to appear on the TIA ballot.

Mr. Liakakis opened the public hearing portion of the meeting.

Mr. Leon Davenport from Chatham County explained how unpredictable project schedules can be. The Jimmy Deloach projects are nearing the right-of-way phase and having funding programmed is essential to move it forward. If we don't find funding, this ready-to-go project will be put on the shelf.

The public hearing was closed.

Mr. Thomson noted that the Jimmy Deloach projects will likely be in the TIP once some adjustments are made to maintain the fiscal balance.

It was moved and seconded to approve the proposed 2035 LRTP amendments for various projects.

**CORE Board Action: the motion to approve the proposed 2035 LRTP amendments for various projects carried with none opposed.**

#### **IV. Other Business**

No other business at this time.

**V. Status Reports**

**A. FY 2013-2016 TIP Priority Establishment**

Ms. Wang began her report with a review of current policies and priorities. There are three priorities for highway & bridge projects, plus transit priorities and other (non-motorized) priorities. She reviewed the specific projects in each category and priority. This included highway projects, bridge projects, non-motorized projects, transit projects, transportation enhancement projects, lump sum projects, and earmark projects. Public comment has been collected on this issue. Comments include “complete streets” incorporation into projects, concern about project delays, and concern about consistency between priority listing and project programming.

Mr. Thomson commented on the MPO CORE board’s consistency in supporting the priority list through the years. This support has aided in accomplishing so many projects. Ms. Wang referred the board to the list of completed projects included in the staff report.

Mr. Egan asked how one finds out if a project has a “complete streets” component. Mr. Thomson referred him to the project sponsor for the project in question, e.g. Chatham County for county projects. It is up to the project engineers to implement policies such as “complete streets”.

**B. SR204 Corridor Study Update**

Mr. Michael Adams introduced Mr. Grady Smith, the consultant from Jacobs Engineering and Linda Fig, consultant from Fig Engineering.

Mr. Smith presented a study overview, stated the major study goals, reviewed the evaluation criteria, and presented the proposed local preferred alternative. The project has a western segment (I-95/SR 204), a central segment (includes King George Blvd improvement), and an eastern segment (current business district area). The eastern segment is the main focus of this presentation. The proposed local preferred alternative appears to be an elevated lanes alternative serving through traffic, with slower traffic at grade level. This alternative saves on right-of-way which saves on overall cost and local business displacement. This alternative also allows for implementation of “complete streets” on the lower level.

Ms. Fig reported on the actual construction of elevated lanes and how to maintain traffic flow during construction. This portion would be about 2.9 miles from the east side of the Forest River to the Truman Parkway/Abercorn connection. She reviewed existing elevated roadway projects in other communities as a model for the Savannah project. She also explained how the construction would be accomplished while maintaining traffic flow at all times. She spoke about the improved environmental and safety features of this elevated alternative.

Mr. Smith highlighted the next steps for this project. They are to refine the preferred alternative, develop a future vision plan for corridor land use and transportation, identify and evaluate potential funding, and schedule a public information meeting in June 2012.

Mr. Liakakis asked that a presentation of this project be made before the Savannah City Council and the County Commissioners.

Mr. Tollison asked for local stakeholder reaction to this alternative. Mr. Adams responded that this alternative receives the most positive reaction mostly because of the limited right-of-way. Mr. Tollison questioned funding sources for the entire corridor. Mr. Thomson explained that they are proceeding in a different order, addressing funding (i.e. tolling) and specific design at certain intersections before environmental or preliminary engineering. Mr. Thomson noted that this project is not included in the current TIA proposal, but possibly in a future TIA, if the first one passes.

## **VI. Agency Reports**

### **A. Georgia Department of Transportation**

Mr. Brad Saxon reported they are waiting on FHWA notification in regard to joint-ownership of lighting fixtures at I-16/I-95. He reviewed the project list as follows:

#1 – Back River Bridge – Construction should be 2012, not 2013

#2 – King George Blvd – environmental document approved; ROW beginning shortly

#7 – Gulf Stream at RB Miller – environmental document is at FHWA. The other Gulfstream project is underway. The two projects would have been together except for the re-scoping of the #7 project.

#20 – Intersection improvement on SR 204 in west Chatham – ROW acquisition is beginning now

### **B. Liberty County Projects**

Mr. Sonny Timmerman reported that their urbanized area expanded slightly, but he does not expect any changes in their MPO. They are developing a local project list for TIA funding – regional projects for the 75% and local lists for the 25% portion. Their local Chamber is getting the word out to the public.

### **C. Chatham County**

Mr. Davenport reported that documents are with FHWA on the Bay St. widening project. He expects right-of-way acquisition to resume around August 2012. Work should begin soon on the Dean Forest Rd. widening project.

### **D. City of Savannah**

No report at this time.

### **E. Chatham Area Transit**

Ms. Sarah Rayfield reported recent accomplishments of CAT. Ridership increased 16%. They are working to improve on-time performance. They have submitted several grant applications, increased CAT's online presence, presented university pass program to students and faculty, and launched the accessible taxi program. The Transit Center construction is currently ahead of schedule, and bids are being requested for installing shelters, benches, etc.

### **F. Georgia Ports Authority**

No report at this time.

### **G. Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport**

Mr. George Fidler reported extending one main taxiway and building a new taxiway. Airways Ave construction and traffic signals are underway. The Airport Master Plan Update is under development.

### **VII. Other Public Comments**

No public comments at this time.

### **VIII. Announcements**

- The next meeting will be June 27, 2012.
- The October meeting is moved from October 24 to October 31.
- Coastal Regional Commission meeting with Todd Long on May 9<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 AM at Richmond Hill City Center.

### **IX. Non-agenda items**

None.

### **X. Adjournment**

There being no further business the April 25, 2012 CORE Board meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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