



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

**CORE MPO BOARD  
MEETING SUMMARY**

**MPC Arthur A. Mendonsa Hearing Room  
112 E. State Street**

**April 24, 2013**

**10:00 AM**

**Voting Members**

**Representing**

**Present**

James Aberson	ACAT	x
Russ Abolt	Chatham County	x
Jason Buelterman	City of Tybee Island	
Stephanie Cutter	City of Savannah	
Mark Egan	CAC	x
Curtis Foltz	Georgia Ports Authority	
Keith Golden	GDOT	
Patrick S. Graham	Savannah Airport Commission	
Tennyson Holder	City of Garden City	
William W. Hubbard	Savannah Area Chamber of Commerce	
James Hungerpillar	Town of Vernonburg	
Edna Jackson	City of Savannah	x
Glenn Jones	City of Port Wentworth	
LTC Edward Kovaleski	Hunter Army Airfield	
Mike Lamb	City of Pooler	
Pete Liakakis	CAT Board of Directors	x
J. Adam Ragsdale	MPC	
Chad Reese	Chatham Area Transit	x
Al Scott	Chatham County Commission	x
Anna Maria Thomas	Town of Thunderbolt	
Wayne Tipton	City of Bloomingdale	
Trip Tollison	Savannah Economic Development Authority (SEDA)	

**Voting Member Alternates**

**Representing**

**Present**

George Fidler	Savannah Airport Commission	x
Brian Johnson	City of Garden City	x
Tom McQueen	GDOT	x
Diane Schleicher	City of Tybee Island	x

**Regional Coordination Guest**

**Representing**

**Present**

Sonny Timmerman	Liberty County	x
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<u>Others Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Michael Adams	MPO Staff	X
Kim Anderson	CAT	X
Leon Davenport	Chatham County	X
Jessica Hagan	MPO Staff	X
Jane Love	MPO Staff	X
Valerie Ragland	CAT	X
Sarah Rayfield	CAT	X
Brad Saxon	GDOT	X
Barbara Settzo	for MPO	X
Thomas Thomson	MPC Executive Director	X
Wykoda Wang	MPO Staff	X
Mike Weiner	City of Savannah	X
Mark Wilkes	MPO Staff	X
Julie Yawn	MPC Staff	X
Maggie Yoder	GDOT – District 5	X

**Call to Order**

Chairman Al Scott 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 24, 2013 meeting carried with none opposed.**

**II. Committee Reports**

**A. Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation**

Mr. James Aberson reported that the committee had voted to endorse the FY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program and gave input on the priority list for development of the FY 2014-2017 TIP and on the prioritization criteria for the Non-motorized Plan.

**B. Citizens Advisory Committee**

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

**C. Technical Coordinating Committee**

Mr. Mark Wilkes reported that the committee endorsed the FY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program. They also gave input to the prioritization for the TIP and the Non-motorized Plan.

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## D. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Tom Thomson announced that the CORE MPO has received their final grade from the FHWA and FTA re-certification review. Their findings included some recommendations but no corrective actions. The full report will be made available on the website.

He also reported that staff had prepared a package for the Savannah city officials to take on their Washington DC trip.

The GDOT board meeting included a budget report. The new budget is less than the current budget. The big picture is that the budget is trending downward. While sequestration eliminated funding for some airport tower operations in the state, none are in our area.

House Bill 202 changes how funding is distributed among the districts. This could benefit Chatham County. Senate Bill 70 concerns design/build projects. GDOT had reported that they have 167 projects for this new fiscal year. Motor fuel collection is down compared to budget. Collections are down almost 4% from last year.

There are five recently appointed new members to the State Transportation Board.

The process of meeting with the Bryan and Effingham county officials concerning the CORE MPO re-apportionment has begun.

## III. Action Items

### A. Approval of the February 27, 2013 CORE MPO Board Meeting Minutes

It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes of the February 27, 2013 CORE MPO Board Meeting.

**CORE Board Action: the motion to accept the minutes of the February 27, 2012 CORE MPO Board Meeting carried with none opposed.**

### B. Approval of the FY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Wilkes presented the staff report for the FY 2014 UPWP which is the MPO staff work program and budget for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2013. He showed a breakdown of where the money comes from and how the MPO uses it during the 2014 fiscal year. He presented a chart showing the different categories of activities and the percentage of funding for each category. The bulk of the money (87%) goes for Planning and Analysis. This includes the Corridor Studies that will continue from the present year and those anticipated to begin in the coming year. Community outreach is reported as its own category, but each special study also includes its own public participation process, which is

funded as part of the study. The overall budget will be increased in December when remaining 2013 funds are carried forward after fiscal year 2013 is closed out.

Mr. Wilkes outlined new projects expected in fiscal year 2014. This includes Congestion Management Process/Traffic Management Center, Freight Plan in coordination with Hinesville's Freight Plan, Bus Rapid Transit/Park & Ride, and Urban Circulator Study.

When asked, Mr. Wilkes noted that the Park & Ride study includes Bryan and Effingham Counties.

Ms. Schleicher asked for a typical dollar figure devoted to public outreach for any given project study. Mr. Wilkes replied that it varied by study. He noted as example that the Connecting Savannah study and the early phases of the Project DeRenne study were citizen driven efforts with heavy public outreach. Other studies have been more technically driven, but still have significant citizen and stakeholder participation. Mr. Thomson stated that he will ask staff to gather that information for each study.

Mr. Thomson also noted that Hinesville may also be included in the Park & Ride study.

In addition to the new studies, Mr. Wilkes reported on some on-going tasks including the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan update, and the need for a subsequent update to include Bryan & Effingham County projects as the MPA boundary takes in parts of those counties; TIP, UPWP, Traffic Impact Analysis, Carpool Program, board meetings, and grant administration.

The next step is for approval by this board today. Then the UPWP will be sent to GDOT and FHWA for approval which will then allow for the funding contracts to be prepared in time for the coming fiscal year on July 1. There will be rollover funds sometime in December and possibly some additional funding when a multi-county LRTP is begun.

When asked, Mr. Wilkes stated that the rollover funds will go primarily to administrative and strategic planning tasks.

It was moved and seconded to approve the FY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program as presented.

**CORE Board Action: the motion to approve the FY 2014 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) as presented carried with none opposed.**

**IV. Other Business**

No other business at this time.

**V. Status Reports**

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**A. Report on priorities for the development of the CORE MPO's FY 2014-2017 TIP**

Ms. Wykoda Wang presented the staff report. The first step in developing the TIP is to establish priorities and the priority list of projects. So many projects have been implemented that our priority list is short. At this time staff would like to get new projects added to the list. Her report today focuses only on highway and bridge projects. Projects in other categories will be addressed later.

At the TCC and CAC and ACAT meetings, the committee members were asked to score the projects that are in the LRTP but are not on the priority list. This is being done so we are ready with projects when funding becomes available. Ms. Wang presented a chart of the results of this exercise. The most important project for all three committees was the I-516 @ I-16 interchange. This project received the most points in all three committees. When funding is available this would be a good candidate to be included in the TIP. She asked the members here today to score the projects also. Mr. Thomson noted that this was only an advisory exercise and is non-binding. A more objective ranking system is being developed by staff.

Mr. Abolt asked about the project "US 80/Victory Dr. Improvements/Congestion Mitigation". Discussion followed with staff and Mr. Mike Weiner from the city of Savannah, distinguishing this from the improvements related to the Whole Foods location. Mr. Abolt believes this project is very important. Ms. Wang noted that the three committees rated this project quite high in order of importance. Mr. Thomson commented that this area was studied before and the proposal was major. Mr. Weiner confirmed that this project is a high priority for the city.

Mr. Abolt suggested that this priority project list be used to support any further SPLOST request. Mr. Thomson agreed to follow up on that.

Mr. Tom McQueen asked how this exercise fits in with the Long Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Thomson replied that this a preliminary step to be followed by a more technical scale of prioritizing projects.

**B. Non-motorized Project Prioritization Criteria**

Ms. Jane Love presented the staff report. There is a need to prioritize projects for the Non-motorized Transportation Plan, which is under development, because there won't be enough funding to do all of the projects right away. Today she presented criteria to be used to measure the importance of the different projects. Criteria include: usefulness, current level of discomfort, connectivity, lack of alternative routes, congestion mitigation potential, crash reduction potential, and public input.

She explained some revisions staff had made to the proposed prioritization process. Staff decided to use the April meetings as a chance to get feedback on whether and how the criteria should be weighted. She has asked committee members of the various CORE

MPO boards to do an exercise to share their view of the relative importance of the various criteria. What is more important for bicycle projects may not be as important for pedestrian projects so she presented two different tables for committee members to review.

The next step will be to bring in a list of prioritized projects in late summer. A document of the Non-motorized Transportation Plan will be ready for adoption in the fall.

Ms. Diane Schleicher asked about the Tybee bridges including non-motorized components. Ms. Love confirmed that bicycle and/or pedestrian facilities in some areas, such as on US 80, could be accomplished as part of a road project. Other areas would need bike and pedestrian retro-fits, if road projects are not expected there. Ms. Schleicher clarified that she was asking how the MPO could ensure that bike and pedestrian facilities don't get left out of the US 80 project as it moves forward. Ms. Love responded that the Plan would certainly show the US 80 bike and pedestrian facilities in the lists and on the Plan map, even though they are part of a larger project.

### **C. CAT Paratransit Plan Update**

Ms. Sarah Rayfield presented the update. Fixed routes have changed, the New Freedom program has been added, and the policies and practices of the Paratransit Handbook have been revised and incorporated into the plan. CAT worked with a review committee, held two public meetings, presented documents to the CAT Board for approval in February, and now has presented the documents to the ACAT committee and this board.

Mr. Abolt asked if this information was shared with CEMA as they plan hurricane evacuation strategies.

Mr. Chad Reese reported that the last update was in 1991 and he cited the changes in the service since that time. They rejected a price increase for service but hope to get a better control of "no-shows" thereby saving a significant amount of money and resources.

Mr. Aberson recommended the implementation of a travel training program for those people who are functionally capable of using the fixed-route system. This would reduce demand on Teleride. Mr. Reese said such training is intended.

## **VI. Agency Reports**

### **A. GDOT**

Mr. Brad Saxon reported on the Victory Dr./Wallin St. area. The department is undertaking a quick response project to extend the left turn lane at Wallin St. This shortens the Truman side a little but it should help with the blockage.

He then reported on the following:

#1 – Back River bridge replacement – let and awarded. This project will now show up on the Active Projects list.

#2 – King George Blvd. grade separation – construction on schedule to be funded in FY 2014. Public archeological dig site – tour available.

#7 - Gulfstream Rd./ RB Miller Rd. project – still on schedule for June letting. Agreements with the railroad are good.

#9 – Ogeechee Rd. – hydrology and environmental studies are underway.

#18 – SR 204 Veterans Pkwy. to Rio Rd. – on schedule for construction in FY 2014.

When asked about the Skidaway Narrows Bridge, Mr. Saxon said he was aware of delay issues, but they are working through them.

### **B. Liberty County**

Mr. Sonny Timmerman reported a newly begun widening project providing direct access into Ft. Stewart from US 84. They are also conducting a land use study in conjunction with this widening project. Coordination between the two MPOs on the freight plan continues. They are looking into a park and ride component between Savannah and Liberty/Long County. He urged cooperation on this issue.

### **C. Chatham County**

Mr. Leon Davenport reported on W. Bay St. project. They are waiting on Federal Highway Administration's re-authorization of funds so right-of-way acquisition can resume. The design of the Islands Expressway Bridge is moving forward. Dean Forest Rd. reconstruction is on-going.

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

Mr. Mike Weiner reported that a public meeting was held on the DeRenne Ave. Project last night. The Tatemville Wall has a sample completed and the public is invited to view it tomorrow so they will know what it will look like. The foundation is just about finished; the parapet wall should be completed in June and the entire wall completed by August. When asked about public participation in this project, Mr. Weiner replied that the residents have been part of the process for the past 18 months. Easements have been obtained from residents. Mr. Weiner believes the residents are well aware of what is going on. Mr. Weiner also reported the engineering contract was approved by City Council on the LaRoche Ave./Delesseps Ave. project.

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

Ms. Rayfield reported on the following:

- Transit Development Plan (TDP) - advisory review committee was well attended. Public workshops will be held in May. The draft document will be brought to the June CORE MPO meeting and the final document to the CAT Board in July.
- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) – finishing the installation and will begin the pilot program. Full implementation expected this fall.
- Transit Center - scheduled for late September opening.
- Fixed route service change for #14 and #114. Ridership looks strong.
- Public meetings will be held for fixed routes that will shift due to the Transit Center opening.

**F. Georgia Ports Authority**

No report at this time.

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

Mr. George Fidler reported the expansion work is almost complete. The Gulfstream Rd. realignment and tunnel is complete. Traffic signals have been installed at entrance of Gulfstream's new campus and at the intersection of Airways Ave. and Gulfstream Rd. As the airport is within city limits, Mr. Fidler extended thanks to City of Savannah Traffic Engineering Department for all their help.

**VII. Other Public Comments**

No public comments at this time.

**VIII. Announcements**

The next CORE MPO meeting will be June 26, 2013.

**IX. Non-agenda items**

Ms. Schleicher noted that Tybee Island has not heard a response from GDOT Commissioner regarding the US 80 message sign. When asked where it would be placed, it was reported that the definite location has not been determined.

**X. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the April 24, 2013 CORE Board meeting was adjourned.



Respectfully submitted,

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