
<u>Others Present</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Present</u>
Michael Adams	MPO Staff	X
Beverly Davis	RS&H	X
Jessica Hagan	MPO Staff	X
Rachel Hatcher	RS&H	X
Jane Love	MPO Staff	X
Nathaniel Panther	Chatham County	X
Ramond Robinson	CAT	X
Barbara Setzto	for MPO	X
Thomas Thomson	MPC Executive Director	X
Wykoda Wang	MPO Staff	X
Mike Weiner	City of Savannah	X
Mark Wilkes	MPC Transportation Director	X
Julie Yawn	MPC Staff	X
Maggie Yoder	GDOT	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 as presented.

CORE Board Action: the motion to approve the agenda for the April 23, 2014 meeting carried with none opposed.

II. Committee Reports

A. Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Mr. James Aberson reported that the committee endorsed all the action items presented. He also reported asking the committee to consider different ways for the committee to participate as an advisory committee.

B. Citizens Advisory Committee

Mr. Mark Egan reported that the committee endorsed the action items that came before the committee.

C. Technical Coordinating Committee

Mr. Mark Wilkes reported that the committee endorsed the action items that came before the committee. In addition, they had a workshop on the draft financial analysis in the

proposed Long Range Transportation Plan, which will be presented later in this meeting.

D. Executive Director's Report

Mr. Tom Thomson reported that discussions are underway about the reapportionment of the CORE MPO and the structure of the expanded board.

There is activity going on with various studies:

- Victory Drive corridor study – consultant interviews completed; developing a scope and fee with the top-ranked firm; will be ready to begin this project soon.
- I-16 IMR study – working through consultant selection process

Agreements are being finalized with City and MPC and GDOT for, among other things, a greater downtown parking study.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) – request for projects went out. April 30 is the deadline for submission in this competitive program for projects.

Short-term improvements planned for the SR 204 corridor should help with traffic. This area would also benefit from an Advanced Traffic Management System.

The federal legislation known as Map-21 expires the end of September 2014. There is talk of extending it. No resolution yet, but Mr. Thomson does not expect any resolution until after the November elections.

On a state level, as of the April State Transportation Board meeting, there were 242 projects let YTD at a value of \$667,000,000. Revenues remain higher than at the same time last year. This shows a robust program and a positive revenue stream.

Mr. Thomson responded to a question about the status of the I-16 flyover. They have asked GDOT and federal agencies if it is permissible to change the interchange. This involves a lot of technical work which is going forward. No change in the project schedule at this time.

III. Action Items

A. Approval of the February 26, 2014 CORE MPO Board Meeting Minutes

It was moved and seconded to accept the minutes of the February 26, 2014 CORE MPO Board Meeting.

CORE Board Action: the motion to accept the minutes of the February 26, 2014 CORE MPO Board Meeting carried with none opposed.

B. Approval of the FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Mark Wilkes presented the report. He explained that this is the annual work plan and budget for the CORE MPO staff. The new fiscal year (FY) begins on July 1, 2014. Minor updates were made in response to comments from GDOT since the draft first went out. Mr. Wilkes presented a summary of where the money comes from and how it will be used. Total budget is \$3.17 million. About half of this amount is funding balance that was authorized in prior years for projects that are ongoing in FY 2014 and FY 2015.

He outlined new projects – Road Diet Feasibility Study (based on some of the recommendations of the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan), TIP web-based tools, Victory Drive Corridor Study.

He also listed and gave a brief update on all the on-going tasks listed in the UPWP.

The next step is to submit the UPWP to GDOT once it is approved by this board. There will be a mid-year amendment to roll over any unspent FHWA PL funds from fiscal year 2014.

In response to a question about the Victory Drive Corridor Study, Mr. Wilkes explained that a consultant has been selected. The study is just starting. Mr. Thomson added that implementation would be in separate phases.

Ms. Wanda Doyle asked where the US 80 bridges to Tybee fit in. Mr. Wilkes explained that because the MPO study is finished, it does not need to appear in the FY 2015 UPWP; instead, the initial implementation stage is in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Mr. Thomson responded that the project is in the environmental stage. This is complicated with federal lands, wetlands, and environmental issues. This is approximately a 3-year phase and it is fully funded. Funding for construction would be addressed later (in the TIP). Federal approval and right of way acquisition must come first before construction funding.

When asked how consultants were selected, Mr. Wilkes explained that MPC and GDOT procurement procedures are followed. Some consultants are under “on call” contracts for 3-5 years. For larger projects, a separate procurement is carried out.

It was moved and seconded to approve the FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program.

CORE Board Action: the motion to approve the FY 2015 Unified Planning Work Program carried with none opposed.

C. Approval of the FY 2014-2017 TIP Amendment

Ms. Wykoda Wang presented the staff report. She explained that the 2014 fiscal year ends on June 30, 2014. There are several projects that are not ready to have funds authorized in FY 2014 so those need to show funds shifted to FY 2015. Also, GDOT has requested some additional funds for two projects. The amendments presented here today address these issues. She reviewed the projects as follows:

- Bay Street improvements – ROW is on-going; GDOT requested \$25,000 be shown for oversight
- Ogeechee Rd widening – GDOT is doing the environmental process and GDOT requested \$500,000 be shown for oversight for the project
- Gwinnett Street improvements – ROW is programmed for 2015 and construction in FY 2017. Because of the recent approval of the Arena project, the city would like to do a traffic study to determine the impact of the Arena on this project. This will delay ROW to FY 2017 and construction to FY 2019.
- SR 204 Corridor improvement study – moving the project to FY 2015; the funds have been reduced from \$810,000 to \$160,000 for the study
- Savannah/MPO strategic study – adding \$250,000 to FY 2015 for a canal district study
- Jimmy DeLoach Parkway Interchange – unlikely ROW will happen in FY 2014 so they are moving it to FY 2015
- Truman Linear Park Trail – construction moved to FY 2016 since the County and City are negotiating for the City to take over this project.

There are also transit improvement projects that are changing. The second year of MAP-21 funds has been released and CAT would like to access the full 2-year funding in FY 2014 so they are moving it into the FY 2014 TIP.

An addendum to the Long Range Transportation Plan is necessary to include these changes relative to the Ogeechee Road, Gwinnett Street, and SR 204 Corridor projects.

Ms. Wang explained that a public comment period and a public hearing are required for this TIP amendment. It was advertised in the newspaper and on the County and City public information television channels. So far she has received four letters with many comments. Staff has responded to comments from three of the letters. The fourth letter was just received and a response will be drafted.

Mr. Tom McQueen asked for clarification on the SR 204 Corridor Study. Mr. Thomson responded that the study mentioned is a continuation of our long range planning effort in the corridor. The previous study identified a concept that was well received for the long term solution for the corridor. Many of the improvements being made west of the river are consistent with that study. This study is to focus on the commercial section between the end of the Truman and the river, the eastern end. It is to look at land use in the corridor and the impacts on businesses if the proposed project is to be implemented. A grant request from the State Road Toll Authority for the matching funds has been submitted for this.

Mr. Egan asked what happens to the funds when not all the authorized funds are used. Mr. McQueen, from GDOT, and Mr. Thomson confirmed that any leftover funds are de-authorized and returned to the state funding pool.

Ms. Jackson asked if the ROW on Bay St was complete and the response was in that it was not complete.

Before opening the public hearing Mr. Thomson read the following 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 Transportation Improvement Program is the MPO’s short-range planning document and is a staged, multi-year listing of surface transportation projects proposed for federal, state, and local funding within the metropolitan area. All transportation projects must appear in an approved Long Range Transportation Plan and in the Transportation Improvement Program before they can receive federal funds for implementation.”

Mr. Scott opened the public hearing. There being no comments from the public, Mr. Scott closed the public hearing.

It was moved and seconded to approve the FY 2014-2017 TIP Amendment.

CORE BOARD action: the motion to approve the FY 2014-2017 TIP Amendment carried with none opposed.

IV. Other Business

No other business at this time.

V. Status Reports

A. Update on Advanced Traffic Management System Strategic Plan

Mr. Thomson introduced Mr. David Castle, consultant from CDM Smith. Mr. Castle reported that Phase I, the data collection phase, is complete. Phase II has just begun. The purpose of this advanced system would be to improve safety and overcome congestion. CEMA is planning to build a new emergency management center at Hunter Army Airfield, which will commence construction next year. They have reserved some space in their new facility for a new traffic management center.

Phase I began with an inventory of existing equipment and current infrastructure. GDOT manages traffic control on the interstates and state roads, but local traffic control is up to local agencies. There is a local system in place, but this study was undertaken to improve

upon it. Field visits were taken to Jacksonville, Valdosta, Cobb County and GDOT's main traffic management center in Atlanta. The center in Cobb County appears to be a viable model for Chatham County and Savannah.

Phase II will include a study of goals and options and then develop a strategic plan for implementation.

Mr. Thomson reminded the Board to think of this in the context of long range planning. He found it interesting that Cobb County had a picture of what they looked like before their recent improvements, and it was very similar to what we have now.

The question of immediate relief of traffic congestion was raised, such as the explosion of traffic congestion in Pooler. What can we do now? Mr. Castle recommended bringing the various city, county, state agencies together to work more closely on issues of economic development and traffic congestion. Mr. Egan felt that development is getting ahead of traffic management, not growing together. Dr. Reese spoke of moving more people not just moving more cars as an answer to this current growth and projected growth. It was confirmed that this advanced traffic management system will take into consideration transit and existing transit systems.

Mr. Ron Feldner asked about synchronization of traffic signals which helps to alleviate traffic congestion. Mr. Castle noted that was all part of the inventory in Phase I.

Mr. Castle noted that Phase I identified current conditions. Phase II will recommend other solutions. Traffic patterns change and timing of traffic lights has not. Maintenance is important.

Mr. Feldner asked if Cobb County, with a population of 700,000, was a reasonable comparison to Chatham County. Mr. Castle explained that in terms of functionality Cobb County is a good model, though maybe not in terms of scale.

Mr. Thomson reported a lot of discussion with the Airport, GDOT, Gulfstream, and Pooler over the congestion in that area. Pre-emption is a possible solution that could aid transit. As for signal timing, annual review is necessary to keep up with traffic patterns as they change. In the future these changes could be made in real time.

Mr. Scott noted that a county-wide public transit system is a viable solution in light of population estimates for the near future. A population of 400,000 is not inconceivable in the next 16 years.

**B. Total Mobility Plan/2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)
Status Report**

Mr. Wilkes, the project manager, introduced Ms. Beverly Davis from RS&H who is the project consultant. Mr. Wilkes noted that today's presentation is on the financial plan. Mr. Wilkes observed that the financial plan is a few weeks ahead of schedule, but that this is due in part to a projected funding shortfall which has limited our ability to add any new projects to the plan. Usually, new transportation needs are forecasted every five years and added to the LRTP during the plan update, but this time, the vast majority of projects that are in the draft plan were in the LRTP five years ago. It is a struggle to keep the Plan financially constrained. Despite the projected shortfall in funding, the Total Mobility Plan will be a significant step forward in terms of support for complete streets, alternative modes and land use coordination. The specific approaches utilized have been presented to this committee over the past few months.

Ms. Davis reviewed tasks completed, tasks currently underway, and tasks yet to do. The prioritization factors that will be used to measure projects have been identified. The project prioritization is underway. Today she offered the initial financial analysis portion of the plan.

The first step was to identify existing revenues still available. Revenues were provided by GDOT (federal and state) and then SPLOST funds were added in for total revenue of \$1,032,410,725.

Projects that have been completed or are under construction were removed from the list. Remaining projects were updated by cost band and inflation factors. When costs were compared to revenue there was a shortfall of nearly \$280,000,000.

To eliminate the shortfall, they reviewed the project schedules and made adjustments across the three cost bands. Ms. Davis reviewed the projects that had no changes recommended. They would stay on track as previously listed. Then she reviewed the projects that were adjusted by pushing them out to a further cost band or into the vision plan. Lastly, she listed projects that were advanced in the Plan. With these adjustments, the shortfall was reduced but not yet eliminated. The financial plan was brought into balance by reducing the funding for the non-motorized transportation allocation from \$98,000,000 to \$79,000,000. There is an assumption that many of the non-motorized needs will be addressed in road projects as part of a complete streets policy, not just in stand-alone bike or ped. projects. Transit is an important part of the LRTP and will include the Transit Development Plan.

Next steps are to finalize the project prioritization process, complete the travel demand analysis and present a draft financially constrained plan in June. The public comment period will continue into the summer. Comments from the public will be addressed, and a final LRTP will be presented in August for adoption.

There was a discussion about leftover funds being made available to other projects in our Plan. Any leftover money goes back to the state and the state assigns it to other projects which may or may not be projects in our Plan. You can request it but getting it is very unlikely.

C. CAT Bike Share Program

Mr. Ramond Robinson presented an overview of the CAT Bike Share Program. There are two solar power stations, each with eight bikes. One station is at the Transit Center and the other at Ellis Square. A daily pass is \$5.00 and that gets you 1 hour free; \$2.00 per 30 minutes after the first hour. Currently it seems useful for tourists. The system is too small; it needs more stations and more bikes. Station locations ¼ mile apart and in a sunny location, to service the solar panels, are desirable. Rules and regulations about usage are included on the web site which includes the rule prohibiting riding through the squares.

Ms. Jackson asked if this was explained on the station kiosks. Mr. Robinson will investigate including that message on the kiosk.

VI. Agency Reports

A. GDOT

Ms. Maggie Yoder reported on the following projects:

- #1 SR 25 Connector / Bay St. – ROW acquisition is on-going; final plans are 50% complete.
- #2 CS650 / Grange Rd. – final plans are 75% complete.
- #3 Ogeechee Rd. – moving forward to hire a consultant; advertisement went out 4/1.
- #6 Islands Expressway Bridge – preliminary plans are complete; now awaiting environmental approval.
- #11 Airways Ave. – environmental activities are complete; preliminary plans are 75% complete; concept report approved.
- #16 Bike/Ped at Delesseps Ave. / LaRoche Ave. – environmental activities and preliminary design is underway; concept report approved.
- #18 SR 21(SR 30 to I-95) – concept team meeting scheduled for 4/29/14.
- #21 rapid flashing beacon (Tybee) – environmental activities and preliminary plans are complete.

Under Active Construction projects:

- #1 Bridge over Back River – recently let.
- #2 Intersection SR 204 & Largo Dr. – recently let in March.
- #3 SR 204 widening east of Veterans Pkwy. - work began in March.
- #4 King George interchange – anticipate breaking ground in 2-3 weeks.
- #10 SR 204 spur / Whitefield Ave.– awaiting final approval of the wall; 3 months to complete once begun.

Quick response projects:

- Bonny Bridge Rd. and SR 21 – work began in March.

In regard to project #21, Ms. Doyle asked if installation of the flashing signs along US 80, from McKenzie St. to Tybrisia St., was close. Ms Yoder reported that some issues still remain, but once final plans are complete, it will be let. She does not have a time frame at this time.

B. Liberty County

No report at this time.

C. Chatham County

Mr. Nathaniel Panther reported on the following preconstruction projects:

- Bay St. widening – ROW acquisition continues. 74 of the 86 parcels have been acquired.
- Jimmy DeLoach Pkwy. / US 80 Interchange – preliminary field plan review is being held today.

D. City of Savannah

Mr. Mike Weiner reported on the following project:

- Project DeRenne – the interchange justification report was approved by the state and submitted to FHWA about two weeks ago. They have received comments and will be responding shortly.

E. Chatham Area Transit

Mr. Robinson reported that there will be a public meeting on April 24th at the Joe Murray Rivers Transit Center at 5:30.

Mr. Aberson reported that the ACAT will be meeting at the Transit Center for future meetings.

F. Georgia Ports Authority

No report at this time.

G. Savannah-Hilton Head International Airport

Mr. George Fidler reported that the updated Master Plan is just about complete. Roadway improvement projects that benefit the community and the airport will be submitted for inclusion in the LRTP. The public/private partnership for the interim improvements at I-95

interchange is moving forward to mitigate traffic congestion. This partnership is made up of the airport, Gulfstream, GDOT and the mall developer.

VII. Other Public Comments

No public comments at this time.

VIII. Announcements

Mr. Thomson introduced Ron Feldner from Garden City and also SSU intern Kaya Jackson.

The next CORE MPO meeting will be June 25, 2014.

IX. Non-agenda items

Not for presentation.

X. Adjournment

There being no further business, the April 23, 2014 CORE Board meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,

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