

**Garden City
Transportation
Draft**

CHAPTER 6

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

Introduction

Garden City is a member of the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) and relies on the MPO for transportation planning and major transportation infrastructure improvements.

CORE MPO

CORE MPO is a regional transportation policymaking and planning body with representatives of elected and appointed officials from Chatham County and its municipalities, including Garden City, Bryan County and Richmond Hill, Effingham County and its municipalities, as well as modal representatives and executives from local, state and federal agencies.

CORE MPO updated its Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundary in February 2024 which was subsequently approved by the Governor of Georgia.

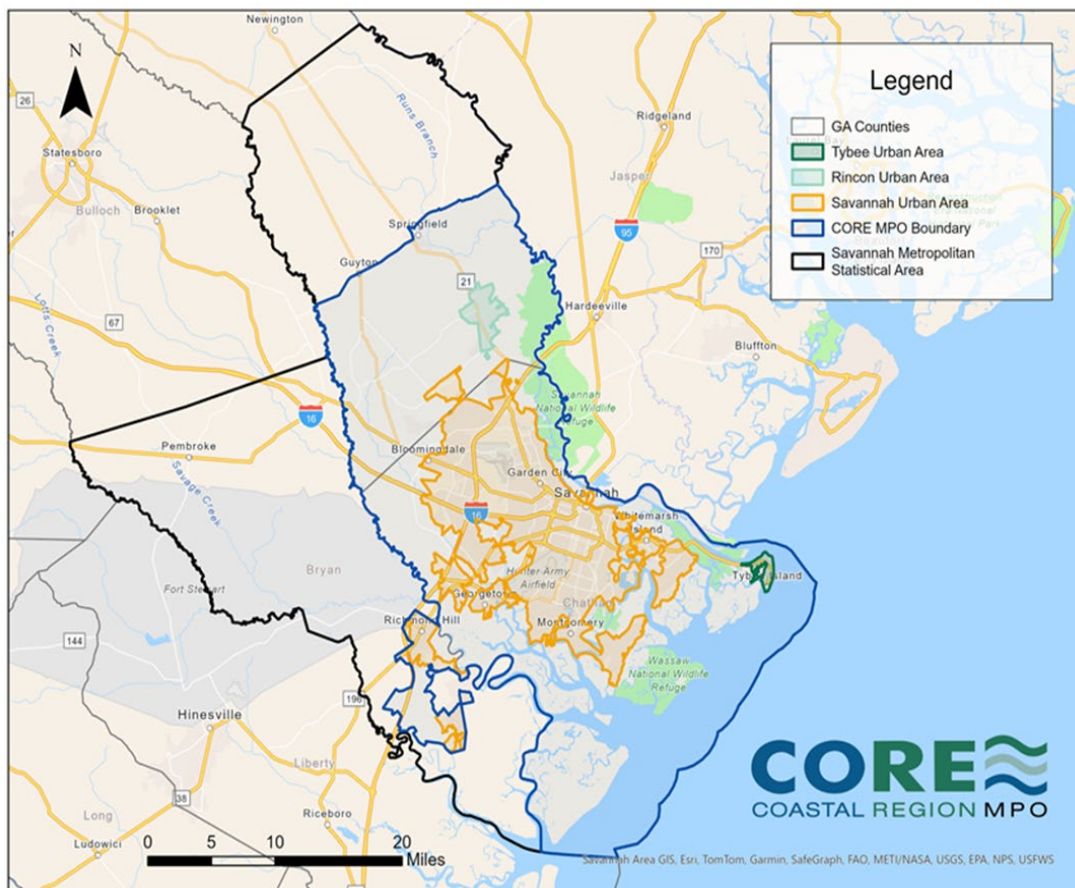


Exhibit 6.1 – CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary 2024

CORE MPO follows the 3-C transportation planning process: comprehensive, continuing, and cooperative. Through this planning process the MPO coordinates regional policies,

corridor studies, and plans and programs such as the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Transportation Planning Updates

Since the adoption of Garden City’s 2040 Comprehensive Plan in October 2021, various transportation plans and studies have been conducted that impact Garden City.

Relevant Transportation Plans and Studies 2021-Present		
Transportation Plans and Studies	Sponsor	Impact Areas
SR 21 Access Study – Completion in March 2022	CORE MPO, Garden City	Garden City, Chatham County
SR 307 Corridor Study – Completion in March 2022	CORE MPO, Chatham County	Chatham County, Garden City, Savannah
Coastal Empire Transportation Study – Completion in February 2023	Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT)	Bryan, Chatham, Effingham and Bullock Counties and their municipalities
Master Transit Plan – Completion in July 2023	Chatham Area Transit	Chatham County, Savannah, Garden City, Port Wentworth
Comprehensive Operational Analysis and Transit Development Plan – Completion in September 2023	Chatham Area Transit	Chatham County, Savannah, Garden City, Port Wentworth
Bus Stop Inventory Study	Chatham Area Transit	Chatham County, Savannah, Garden City, Port Wentworth
US 80 Corridor Study Phase I – Completion in October 2023	Pooler, CORE MPO	Chatham County, Savannah, Garden City, Pooler, Bloomingdale
Regional Freight Transportation Plan – Completion in October 2023	CORE MPO	Bryan, Chatham, Effingham Counties and their municipalities
Flooding Dynamic Modeling Tools for Optimized Planning of CORE MPO Transportation Infrastructure Systems Phase I – Completion in October 2023	CORE MPO	Chatham County and its municipalities, Richmond Hill, portion of Effingham County
FY 2024 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program – Adoption in November 2023	CORE MPO	CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area
Congestion Management Process – Completion in June 2024	CORE MPO	Bryan, Chatham, Effingham Counties and their municipalities
2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan – Adoption in August 2024	CORE MPO	CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area
Regional Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the Coastal Georgia Region – Completion in 2024	GDOT, Coastal Regional Commission	10 coastal counties in Georgia
SR 25/US 17 Corridor Study – Completion in May 2025	Chatham County, CORE MPO	Chatham County, Savannah, Garden City

Relevant Transportation Plans and Studies 2021-Present		
Transportation Plans and Studies	Sponsor	Impact Areas
Chatham Multimodal Community Improvement Project (Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant) – ongoing	Chatham County	Chatham County, Savannah, Garden City, Port Wentworth, GPA, CSX, Norfolk Southern
Call for Projects for Surface Transportation Block Group (STBG), Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and Transportation Alternatives (TA) Funds – October 2025	CORE MPO, GDOT	CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area
Chatham County SPLOST 8 – passed in November 2025	Chatham County and its municipalities	Chatham County and its municipalities
Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Update – Adoption in June 2026	CORE MPO	CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area
FY 2027 – 2030 Transportation Improvement Program – Adoption in 2026	CORE MPO	CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area
Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Study – to be completed by April 2027	CORE MPO	CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area
Flooding Dynamic Modeling Tools for Optimized Planning of CORE MPO Transportation Infrastructure Systems Phase II – to be completed by April 2027	CORE MPO	CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area
Atlanta – Savannah Intercity Passenger Rail Project – ongoing	GDOT	CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area
Southeast Georgia Commuter Feasibility Study – Completion in 2026	GDOT	Multiple counties in Southeast Georgia

Figure 6.1 - Garden City: Transportation Plans and Studies Since October 2021

Travel Characteristics

Regional Commuting Patterns

Chatham County and Garden City are regional hubs for employment and other economic generators. In particular, Chatham County and Garden City are home to the Port of Savannah, which is the largest single container terminal in North America, the second busiest container exporter in the United States, and major economic engine for the region. Many residents of neighboring counties commute into Chatham County for work, passing through or working in Garden City, greatly impacting the traffic patterns and overall efficiency of the transportation network. Commuting traffic in and around Garden City heavily utilizes major thoroughfares including SR 21, US 80, I-16, and US 17.

Regional Commuting Patterns		
Location	Work in County of Residence %	Work Outside County of Residence %
Chatham	92.8%	4.7%
Savannah	94.1%	3.7%
Garden City	91.3%	8.7%
Bryan	29.8%	67.5%
Effingham County	36.3%	58.8%
Bulloch	68.6%	29.7%
Liberty	75.2%	23.7%
Jasper, SC	40.3%	59.7%
Beaufort, SC	94.5%	4.0%
Source: ACS 2022 5-Year Estimates (S0801)		

Figure 6.2 – Garden City: Regional Commuting Patterns

Local Commuting Patterns

Nearly 93% of Garden City residents commute outside the City for work, while nearly 96% of people employed in Garden City live outside of the City, highlighting its role as a major job center, with significant ties to the Georgia Ports Authority and industrial support businesses, as discussed in the Economic Development Element. A typical commute to work is 19 minutes each way.

Commute Mode Share

The proportion of travelers using a given method of transportation is called the "mode share" or the "mode split". Mode share is influenced by the types of facilities or services available. Alternatives include driving alone, taking transit, walking, bicycling, work at home, carpool and other.

Most work trips in Garden City are by automobile: 71.7% of workers drive alone and 22.5% carpool, higher than Chatham County overall at 10.7%. While there is transit service coverage available in Garden City, it makes up less than 1% of the commuting type. About 3.7% of residents work from home, 1.5% walk, and less than 1% bike or use other means.

It is important to note that reported travel behavior does not necessarily reflect the choices people would make if different transportation options were available at a safe and feasible level. While historic transportation policy, funding, and design decisions promoted auto travel and initially advanced mobility, unintended environmental, social, and financial consequences have also transpired as a result.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan

The Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) is a multimodal plan based on the socio-economic development of the CORE MPO region and is intended to provide efficient transportation services to all residents in this area. Its multimodal approach incorporates highway development, transit service, bike/pedestrian improvements, and other related transportation investments. The 2045 MTP (Mobility 2045) was in place when the 2040 Comprehensive Plan of Garden City was adopted in October 2021. Since then, CORE MPO has adopted a new MTP – Moving Forward Together 2050.

The MTP identifies the vision, goals and objectives, strategies and projects that promote mobility for both people and goods. The MTP is updated every five years, at which time the MPO reviews, revises, and recalibrates the travel demand model with updated demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Updating the plan also allows CORE MPO to incorporate results of any new or ongoing studies and any changes to federal regulations and guidance.

Moving Forward Together 2050

CORE MPO adopted the latest MTP - Moving Forward Together 2050 (2050 MTP) – in August 2024. The 2050 MTP emphasizes a multi-modal performance-based approach to transportation planning to meet the travel demands over the next 26 years, while taking into consideration the region's goals and financial capacity. CORE MPO is committed to investing in the regional transportation network to address the growth of the area while

enhancing mobility for people and goods and ensuring a sustainable future. This commitment is incorporated into the 2050 MTP through a diverse and wide-ranging process, including an assessment of transportation needs in coordination with the future regional growth and anticipated future trends, as well as giving more emphasis on resiliency and equity of the transportation system.

2050 MTP Goals

The overall goal of the 2050 MTP is to continue moving the regional transportation planning process beyond the singular focus of moving motor vehicles and consider transportation issues from a comprehensive perspective that incorporates community values, needs, land use, modal alternatives, system resiliency and equity. The goals and objectives are targeted to ensure that the transportation system helps the CORE MPO region attain its overall vision for the future. Through public involvement, stakeholders and citizens helped identify and refine these goals, which provide the framework for the provision of a safe, secure, and efficient multimodal transportation network that meets the mobility needs of both people and freight.


	<h3>Moving Forward Together 2050 Goals</h3>
Safety & Security: Provide a safe and secure transportation system for all users	
Performance and Reliability: Enhance transportation system efficiency and freight movement	
Access & Connectivity: Enhance mobility by improving access to opportunities and multimodal options	
Stewardship: Strategically maintain and improve the transportation system through coordination, economic competitiveness, and resource management	
System & Environmental Preservation: Maintain and preserve the transportation system and natural environment	

Figure 6.3 – Garden City: 2050 MTP Goals

2050 MTP Investments and Performance

The 2050 MTP provides a financially balanced list of projects where the aggregate project costs must not exceed the \$2.179 billion anticipated funding for the 26-year planning period. Federal funds provide the largest share of funding for transportation improvements in the CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area, followed by State funds. State funds mostly come from the Georgia’s motor fuel tax funds. Transportation funds are also generated by local sources, which come from local governments’ general funds, including: Special

Purpose Local Option Sales Tax (SPLOST); transit sales tax; transit fare box receipts; and transit district tax.

It is estimated there will be approximately \$1.86 billion available in highway funds and \$315 million in transit funds over the life of the plan. The highway investments include specific project improvements and revenue set-asides for four category projects: Maintenance; Operational Improvements; Transit Set Aside; and Non-Motorized Set Aside.

Specifically, 93.2% of project funds are allocated for highway safety and 30.7% for transit safety, aligning with the Vision Zero goals. Focused 2050 MTP investments also address freight (78.6%), congestion management (93.7%), and pavement and bridges (32.1%) safety. ITS, maintenance, electric charging projects, transit and non-motorized projects all help to improve air quality (43.0%). In addition to enhancing transit safety, the FTA and FHWA sourced transit improvements foster achievement of transit asset management goals (14.5%).

Projects identified as “needs” but not included in the 2050 MTP are incorporated into the Vision Plan as an unfunded project list. Subsequent plan updates will utilize the Vision Plan for these projects to include when funds become available.

CORE MPO’s Moving Forward Together 2050 Plan (2050 MTP), inclusive of its amendments and addenda, is the most up to date and comprehensive plan governing transportation issues in Garden City. The 2050 MTP can be found on the CORE MPO website at <https://www.thempc.org/Core/Mtp2050#gsc.tab=0>.

Transportation Improvement Program

To implement the highest priority MTP projects, a subset, the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is developed, serving as the MPO’s short-range programming document, covering a four-year planning period. It lists the multi-modal projects to be funded with federal revenues and regionally significant projects. Development phases (preliminary engineering (PE), right-of-way (ROW), utility relocation (UTL), and construction (CST)), funding sources and implementation schedules are established and documented.

When the 2040 Plan was adopted, the FY 2021–2024 TIP was in place, superseded by the FY 2024–2027 TIP adopted in November 2023, followed by the FY 2027–2030 TIP, adopted in 2026, which will serve as a baseline for transportation implementation strategies. The TIP information can be found on the CORE MPO website at: <https://www.thempc.org/Core/Tip#gsc.tab=0>.

Through TIP programming, various projects included in the MTPs have been implemented since 2021, including the following ones that are under construction or are completed. These projects all have impact on Garden City’s transportation system.

- PI# 0012757, I-16 from I-95 to I-516 (including PI# 0012758, I-95/I-16 Interchange Reconstruction)
- PI# 0013727, I-16 @ SR 307 (Diverging Diamond Interchange)
- PI# 0006328, Brampton Road Connector from Foundation Drive to SR 21/SR25/US80
- Repairs on Chatham Parkway Bridge over I-16
- Various operational and maintenance lump sum projects

The MTP projects impacting Garden City that are in the pipeline for implementation through TIP include the following:

- PI# 0020351, I-16 from W Gwinnett St. to Chatham Pkwy – NEVI Charging Station
- PI# 0020282, SR 307 from Garden City #635909H to Old Louisville Road – Grade Separation
- Various operational and maintenance lump sum projects

Local Projects

Besides MTP and TIP, the Garden City Public Works Department works on preservation of City streets, ditches, street signs, and sidewalks as well as removal of storm debris.

Garden City has implemented the following transportation improvement projects with local funds since October 2021:

- Removal of debris from Hurricane Helene
- Street Maintenance – citywide

Garden City has programmed the following transportation improvement projects for implementation in the next five years:

- Street Resurfacing and Paving (SPLOST 8)
- Sidewalk Rehabilitation (SPLOST 8)

Road Network

Highway Functional Classification

There are approximately 2,940 miles of public roadways in the Savannah MSA region divided into various functional classifications: Local; Minor and Major Collectors; Minor and Principal Arterials; Freeway/Expressway; and Interstate Highway. Approximately 60 miles of these roadways are located in Garden City, including:

- A 3.5-mile stretch of I-16 that crosses through the City.

- SR 21, consisting of 3.5 miles of roadway, serves as the main north-south arterial in the City, providing localities north of Garden City a direct connection to downtown Savannah with subsequent high traffic volumes.
- A 3.6-mile length of US 80 crosses through the middle-to-southern portion of the City.
- US 17 acts as the southern boundary of the City limits.
- The remainder of the City consists of primarily local roads with collectors providing access to the major transportation routes in the City.

The highway functional classification (FC) is updated every 10 years with the decennial census. The majority of the FC does not change. In November 2024, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Georgia Division approved the updates to the Highway Functional Classification System in the CORE MPO region. One of them, re-classifying Pine Meadow Drive from a Local to a Major Collector, is near Garden City.

Bridges

In relation to the waterways and topography, there are 311 bridges and 96 box culverts in the CORE MPO region. It is important to have a good understanding of the bridge locations and conditions to monitor safety, congestion and freight movement. There are 16 bridges within the City limits of Garden City, consisting of highway and railroad overpasses, and small crossings over creeks and canals.

Freight mobility may be impacted if a facility does not have sufficient vertical clearance (generally 26.5 feet), resulting in diversion to less efficient routes. In general, bridges with less than 16.5 feet of vertical clearance can impose significant challenges to the movement of goods. There is one bridge in Garden City that does not meet the current standard for minimum vertical clearance: Structure No. 5101560 - Chatham Parkway over I-16. The insufficient height has resulted in damage to the bridge when a vehicle towing an excavator crashed into the overpass in 2024. In 2025, GDOT repaired the damage, however, a long-term solution to raise the vertical clearance is needed.

Posted bridges with a weight limit below the standard truck axle distribution weight present a challenge to efficient freight movement. Heavier trucks must detour around the bridge or reduce its payload, resulting in more trucks for the same haul. None are located in Garden City.

Pavement Conditions

Roadway pavement conditions can impact the cost and safety of passenger and freight travel, causing wear and tear on vehicles and damaging the transported goods, as well as impacting travel time-based performance measures.

Pavement conditions impact safety performance, and are sorted into three categories: good, fair and poor. About 84% the CORE MPO region's roadway network has pavements are rated good to fair condition. Garden City's proximity to the Georgia Ports Authority's Garden City Terminal and associated industrial areas generate a significant volume of freight traffic on SR 21 and portions of SR 307/Bourne Avenue within or close to the City, which significantly impacts pavement conditions.

More information on the Highway Functional Classification, Bridges and Pavement Conditions in the CORE MPO region can be found in the CORE MPO Regional Freight Transportation Plan at <https://www.thempc.org/Core/Fp#gsc.tab=0>.

Intermodal Transportation

Intermodal describes the mass transportation of freight or human passengers, usually over long distances, and via more than one mode of transportation.

Port of Savannah

The Port of Savannah and the Georgia Ports Authority (GPA) continue to be a major transportation hub and economic engine for both the CORE MPO region and Garden City. The Port of Savannah is the largest and fastest growing container terminal in America and the 3rd busiest container port complex in U.S., and a major distributor of agricultural products.

The Port is comprised of two deep water terminals. The Garden City Terminal handles container traffic and both Norfolk Southern (NS) and CSX Transportation operate at the Mason Mega Rail Terminal. The Ocean Terminal has on-dock rail access via NS and CSX and handles breakbulk, roll-on/roll-off, and container traffic. This facility is being converted to primarily handle containers. Several projects in the pipeline include:

- Ocean Terminal @ CS 2356/Louisville Road & @ SR 25/US 17 Ramp,
- SR 404 Spur/US 17 @ Savannah River Crossing, and
- Port of Savannah Renewable Fuel Project.

In 2021, despite the COVID-19 pandemic's substantial disruption of national and international supply chains, GPA handled 41.6 million tons of trade including 5.6 million twenty-foot equivalent container units (TEUs). The total TEU varied in later years - 5,892,131 in 2022, 4,927,654 in 2023, and 5,545,557 in 2024. The 2025 TEU reached 5,251,850 in January to November and is expected to exceed the 2024 volume when the December data is available.

The newly completed Savannah Harbor Expansion Project supports jobs and commerce throughout the nation. The project allows newer larger freighters to navigate the river with greater flexibility. The total economic impact of Georgia's deep-water ports on Georgia's economy is \$84 billion. GPA supports more than 369,000 jobs and approximately \$20.4 billion in personal income annually.

Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport

Garden City is in close proximity to the Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport (SAV) which is a commercial and military-use airport in Savannah, Georgia. The Savannah/Hilton Head International Airport (SAV), the second busiest in Georgia, is a commercial and military-use airport owned by the City of Savannah and managed by the Savannah Airport Commission. SAV serves as the chief commercial airport for Savannah, the Coastal Empire region of southeast Georgia and the Lowcountry of South Carolina. The Hilton Head, S.C. resort accounts for 40% of total airport passenger traffic.

SAV is currently served by eight passenger carriers and serves as the world headquarters for Gulfstream Aerospace. The Georgia Air National Guard's 165th Airlift Wing is also based at SAV. The only regional public airport handling cargo, it accommodates five dedicated cargo carriers, with 138,000 square feet of public and private on-site air cargo warehouse space in two structures. In 2024, SAV handled 2,063,282 enplanements, 2,071,099 deplanements, and 13,514.60 tons of air cargo. Cargo handling facilities are sited along Bob Harmon Road, accessed by SR 307/Dean Forest Road. As air cargo is typically interchanged with highway freight, SAV impacts these and surrounding roadways by generating truck traffic to and from its air cargo facilities.

SAV Improvement Projects 2021-2026	
Completed Projects	Current Projects - 2026
Security Checkpoint Expansion	Fuel Storage Facility
	Air Cargo Facility
Construct Auxiliary Parking	Terminal Concourse Expansion
Demo Quail Run Lodge	Taxiway G & Bridge
	Demo Air Cargo Phase 1B.

Freight Rail Service

Within the CORE MPO region, 278.9 miles of freight network exist. Two Class I railroads, Norfolk Southern (NS) and CSX Transportation, carry long-distance freight into other regions of the United States or internationally into Canada and Mexico. Seven Class III railroads provide direct, last-mile connections to key destinations in the freight network, including ports, industrial facilities, and warehousing and distribution centers. The major commodities transported by these integrated rail systems are pulp and paper, furniture, fixtures, tobacco products, rubber and plastics, leather, clay, concrete, glass or stone

products, fabricated metal products, non-electrical and electrical machinery, and scrap metals

Garden City contains roughly 56 miles of railroads owned and operated by CSX Transportation and Norfolk Southern, primarily related to the transport of commodities to and from the Georgia Ports Authority. Two rail intermodal terminals are components of the freight rail system in the region, including the Mason Mega Rail Terminal adjacent to the Port of Savannah's Garden City Terminal that opened at full capacity in 2022.

Freight Intensive Land Uses

Freight intensive land uses, typically warehouses and distribution centers, are generally concentrated along the Savannah River and I-95 north of Louisville Road. The numerous warehouses and distribution centers are an important consideration when discussing intermodal transportation. The freight intensive land uses in Garden City are located near major freight generators such as the Port of Savannah and the freight rail terminals.

Truck Parking

Freight intensive land uses in and around Garden City mean that truck parking is a critical consideration. Of the total 22 truck parking facilities in the CORE MPO region, three commercial parking facilities are located in Garden City.

Railroad Crossings

Rail crossings can be at-grade or grade separated. Grade separation refers to a crossing in which the roadway and rail are at different elevations. At-grade rail crossings represent points where the highway and rail systems interact and have the potential for conflict, posing safety hazards.

In total, there are 192 public at-grade rail crossings in the CORE MPO region. Of the 10 busiest public at-grade rail crossings, three are located in Garden City:

- NS at Big Hill Road (Near Charlie Gay Dr.)
- CSX at Nelson Avenue (Near SR 25),
- CSX at SR 307/Bourne Avenue (Near SR 21).

Chatham County secured a Railroad Crossing Elimination Grant in 2023 and is conducting the Multimodal Community Improvement Project in coordination with Savannah, Garden City, Port Wentworth, GPA, CSX, and Norfolk Southern. The findings from this study will be incorporated into the next Freight Plan update.

More information on GPA, SAV, Freight Rail System, Freight Intensive Land Use, Truck Parking Inventory, and Railroad Crossings can be found in the CORE MPO Regional Freight Transportation Plan at <https://www.thempc.org/Core/Fp#gsc.tab=0>.

Non-Motorized Transportation

While the automobile is the primary mode of transportation in the CORE MPO region, bicycling and walking are important modes. CORE MPO and Garden City have a strong commitment to provision of safe and connected facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists.

Since October 2021, CORE MPO has undertaken various planning efforts regarding non-motorized transportation which will impact the City of Garden City, including the following.

- CORE MPO updated the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. The plan identified: needed improvements for the non-motorized modes; areas for amenities to help create a human-scale environment that encourages use of physically active modes; and prioritized improvements and identified funding opportunities.
- CORE MPO is conducting the Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Study with completion slated in March 2027. The study will: create a bike and pedestrian facility inventory; conduct a comprehensive regional non-motorized needs assessment; and provide recommendations for improvements that can be incorporated into the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and local plans for implementation.

CORE MPO and Garden City have also worked on implementing non-motorized projects with or without federal funds since October 2021. These included projects from the 2014/2020 Non-Motorized Transportation Plan and projects implemented by Garden City’s Public Works Department.

Transit Systems

Chatham Area Transit Authority

The Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) is the agency responsible for the provision of transit services to the Savannah area, specifically the City of Savannah, the unincorporated Chatham County, and portions of Garden City and Port Wentworth, providing a combination of bus and ferry service.

CAT Mobility provides paratransit transportation for people with disabilities. People can use this service to travel anywhere in Chatham County, including Garden City. CAT operates three fixed routes that service Garden City.

Average Annual Passengers Per Hour By Route						
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
3 WEST CHATHAM	14.8	13.7	9.4	7.6	8.0	12.8
3B AUGUSTA AVENUE	23.3	20.6	14.4	12.4	16.2	22.5
17 SILK HOPE	17.2	16.2	13.0	9.3	10.5	16.5

Figure 6.4 – Average Annual Passengers Per Hour by Route

In June 2023, CAT expanded services into Garden City by adding six new ADA-accessible bus stops with shelters along SR 21, including locations at: Priscilla D. Thomas Way & Augusta Ave; Varnedoe Ave & Augusta Ave; and Smith Ave & Augusta Ave (inbound/outbound). Garden City funded the expansion through an agreement with CAT, paying from the City's general fund. The expansion aims to improve access to employment (e.g. the growing port/warehouse community), grocery stores, medical facilities, and educational opportunities for Garden City residents.

CAT Planning and Programming

CAT continues to evaluate system coverage and operation and analyze ridership to ensure an efficient and reliable transit system is in place for the community. Since October 2021, CAT has completed various planning efforts, including the following.

- **Master Transit Plan:** Outlines a strategic plan for the future of mobility (beyond 5 years) and positions CAT to respond to opportunities created through local and regional growth, new transportation technologies, and lessons learned about travel needs and patterns.
- **Comprehensive Operational Analysis and Transit Development Plan:** It provides an analysis of current services and a guide for improvements over the next 5 years. The recommended changes are primarily focused on service changes to the fixed routes and the introduction of new complimentary micro-transit services to best respond to growing and changing customer needs.
- **Bus Stop Inventory Study:** Assesses the 1,000+ bus stops using a GIS database for location and condition, focusing on safety, lighting, accessibility (ADA), and stop amenities.

CAT has identified the following capital improvements to provide more efficient and accommodating services and to meet the future needs of the growing community, including Garden City.

CAT Improvement Projects	
Short Term (TIP Years)	Long Term
Transit ITS	Vehicle Replacement/Expansion - Fixed Route
Preventative Maintenance	Vehicle Replacement – Paratransit
Facility Enhancements and Rehabilitation	Intelligent Transit System (ITS)
Vehicle Replacement/Purchase	Upgraded Farebox and Payment System
Ferry Boat Rehab, Purchase and Construction	Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
Paratransit Maintenance Facility	Passenger Amenities
Bus Stop Improvement Program	Facility Improvement Project – ITC
Gillig Zero Emission Buses (35-ft)	Facility Improvement Project – Gwinnett

CAT Improvement Projects	
Short Term (TIP Years)	Long Term
Infrastructure & Depot Charging	Vanpool Capital
	Park & Ride Capital
	Facility Construction - Ferry Maintenance Facility
	Facility Construction - Ferry Dock
	Ferry Boat Construction

Figure 6.5 – CAT Improvement Short- and Long-Term Projects

CAT has identified the following operational improvements that will impact Garden City.

- Introduced new services like Route 5 and SMART Microtransit for broader connectivity in West Chatham, including Garden City.
- Discussing transportation solutions for workers commuting to the new Hyundai plant.

Coastal Regional Commission

The Coastal Regional Commission (CRC) operates the Coastal Regional Coaches which is part of the regional rural public transit program that provides general public transit service in the ten coastal Georgia counties including Bryan, Chatham and Effingham. This demand-response, advance reservation service is available to anyone, for any purpose, and to any destination in the coastal region, including Garden City. The CRC service must have either origin or destination outside of the Savannah Urbanized Area (UZA) and it supplements the CAT service which is mostly within the Savannah UZA.

In 2024, CRC and GDOT completed the Regional Transit Development Plan (TDP) for the Coastal Georgia Region. The plan is a guide for CRC and its 10 member counties, along with their implementation partners, to advance a regional transit system that aligns with community based regional transit vision and goals. The plan provides robust documentation of regional mobility conditions and contributing context and identities next steps to advance specific transit service recommendations. Where relevant, the plan identifies alternative service options that advance long-term transit goals but require further regional consideration. The overarching goal of the Regional TDP is to facilitate public transit accessibility to all community members in the region with particular focus on residents who are transit dependent.

Transportation Technology

Innovations in transportation technology are often born out of three necessities: efficiency, ease, and safety. Further exploration of transportation related technology in the Garden City includes but is not limited to: automated vehicle technology; autonomous vehicles; traffic operational improvements for its 13 signalized intersections; ride sharing; and bike/scooter options.