

COASTAL REGION METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION APRIL 2026 MPO MEETINGS

Agenda Item: Amendments to FY 2026 UPWP

Presenter: Zhongze (Wykoda) Wang, CORE MPO Staff

Summary: The FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), adopted in February 2025, is the MPO's staff work program for the fiscal year that runs from July 1, 2025 to June 30, 2026. The UPWP details the staff budget and work projects expected to be undertaken by the MPO in support of the federally mandated 3-C (Continuing, Cooperative and Comprehensive) transportation planning process.

The planning activities in the work program are supported by the formula Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) planning (PL) funds, Increasing Safe & Accessible Transportation Options funds (Y410) funds, as well as the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5303 funds, with matching funds from MPO member agencies.

The FY 2026 UPWP includes several Strategic Studies in the Unfunded Section. These studies have gone through several rounds of discussion by the CORE MPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC). In February 2026, the CORE MPO Board authorized staff to submit applications for the Discretionary PL Funds to the Georgia PL Funds Review Committee for two of these studies on behalf of Chatham County and City of Savannah.

- Ferguson Avenue from Diamond Causeway to Skidaway Road – Chatham County
- Bay Street Microsimulation Modeling - City of Savannah



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The scopes and cost estimates for these two studies were further examined in February 2026 for the grant application preparation. Some updates have been made. The April 2026 proposed action is to amend the FY 2026 UPWP by moving the two approved studies from the Unfunded Section to the Funded Section of the UPWP, incorporating updates to the project details and ensuring consistency between the UPWP and the Discretionary PL funding applications and awards. The attached documentation shows the updated information for these two studies in the CORE MPO's FY 2026 UPWP.

Next steps will include procurement activities by CORE MPO in coordination with the study sponsors (Chatham County and City of Savannah), execution of funding contracts with GDOT, as well as execution of Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for local match commitment. It is anticipated that the studies will begin in the fall of 2026.

Recommendation: For endorsement and approval of proposed FY 2026 UPWP amendments.

Appendix:

Appendix A: Updated Project Information in FY 2026 UPWP

Appendix B: Resolution to Amend the FY 2026 UPWP

Appendix C: Grant Award Letter



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Appendix A: Updated Project Information in FY 2026 UPWP



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Task 7 Special Studies

Objective: Support the maintenance and updates of the MTP and TIP through detailed study of specific transportation issues or specific transportation facilities which the CORE MPO has determined require focused attention and additional resources. Normally the studies included in this Task require consultant services and the listed budgets are used to pay for the services. Staff management and coordination of the funded highway studies are charged to Task 4, System Planning and Operations. Staff management and coordination of funded transit studies are listed under Task 5, Transit Planning. For completed and ongoing studies, this section focuses on those with funding passing through FHWA. For unfunded studies, those with expected funding passing through both FHWA and FTA area listed.

COMPLETED STUDIES

FY 2025 Activities: The following plans and studies have been completed in FY 2025. The recommendations from these studies will feed into CORE MPO's future MTP and TIP.

- US 17/SR 25 Corridor Study – Managed by Chatham County and funded by CRRSAA funds.
- President Street at Truman Parkway Railroad Crossing Grade-Separation Study - Managed by Chatham County and funded by CRRSAA funds.

ONGOING STUDIES

FY 2026 Activities: Several studies kicked off or continued in FY 2025 and will continue in FY 2026. The Transportation Planning Department staff will either manage these studies or coordinate with the project sponsors during the study development process. The recommendations from these studies will feed into CORE MPO's future MTP and TIP.

- SR 204 Between King George Blvd and US-17 – Managed by Chatham County and funded by CRRSAA funds. Completion is expected in the first quarter of FY 2026.
- I-16 Exit Ramp Removal IMR Update – Managed by GDOT/the City of Savannah and funded by federal earmark funds.
- US 80 Corridor Study Phase II – Managed by CORE MPO and Effingham County and funded with the Apportioned Planning funds.
- Urban Flooding Dynamic Modeling Tools for Optimized City Planning of Transportation and Infrastructure Phase II - Managed by CORE MPO and funded with the Apportioned Planning funds.
- Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Study - Managed by CORE MPO and funded with the Apportioned Planning funds.

NEWLY FUNDED STUDIES

FY 2026 Activities: CORE MPO applied for Apportioned Planning funds (discretionary PL funds) to the Georgia PL Funds Review Committee on behalf of Chatham County and City of Savannah for two studies in March 2026. Both studies received funding awards. CORE MPO staff will work with the project sponsors to conduct the RFP process during the last quarter of FY 2026 and 1st quarter of FY 2027. CORE MPO will also work with GDOT and the project



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sponsors to execute funding contracts for the federal funds and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the local match funds. It is expected that both studies will kick off in the 1st quarter or 2nd quarter of FY 2027. The study duration is expected to be two years.

- Ferguson Avenue from Diamond Causeway to Skidaway Road – Chatham County

CORE MPO – FERGUSON AVENUE STUDY - FY 2026 SAVANNAH UPWP

Requested \$200,000 (\$200,000 Federal, \$0 Local due to Y410 eligibility) to develop the Ferguson Avenue Study. The PL Funds Review Committee voted yes for approval of this application request. The GDOT project ID is **PI 0021573**.

- Bay Street Microsimulation Modeling – City of Savannah

CORE MPO – BAY STREET MICROSIMULATION MODELING - FY 2026 SAVANNAH UPWP

Requested \$180,000 (\$144,000 Federal, \$36,000 Local) to develop the Bay Street Microsimulation Modeling. The PL Funds Review Committee voted yes for approval of this application request. The GDOT project ID for this study is **PI 0021574**.

UNFUNDED STUDIES

FY 2026 Activities: Several unfunded studies are listed in this section. The Transportation Planning Department staff will work with the project sponsors to apply for funds from different sources. If grant funds are awarded, staff will amend the FY 2026 UPWP to move the unfunded studies into the funded section. Staff will then either conduct the RFP process or assist the sponsors for the RFP process, depending on project management arrangements.

- Regional Truck Parking Study
- Coastal Region MPO Efficiency and Quality Improvement Plan (EQIP)
- Islands Expressway Between Truman Parkway and US 80
- LaRoche Avenue from Jasmine Avenue to Bluff Drive

- Transit Oriented Development Study
- Transit Stops Amenities Study
- Mobility Hub Study and Program
- Bus Rapid Transit Feasibility Study



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NEWLY FUNDED STUDY - UPDATED PROJECT INFORMATION

Ferguson Avenue from Diamond Causeway to Skidaway Road (PI 0021573)

Project Description: Ferguson Avenue has not yet been evaluated through a comprehensive, corridor-wide study. This study will build upon existing regional safety efforts to develop a focused and implementable strategy for this segment. Ferguson Avenue, from Diamond Causeway to Skidaway Road, serves as an important community corridor connecting established residential neighborhoods with commercial destinations and school bus locations. This segment has identified community concerns and has been deemed a high-need area for multimodal and pedestrian-focused improvements. A history of many pedestrian-involved crashes is documented along and near the corridor, including two recent pedestrian fatalities. Existing roadway characteristics, including vehicle speeds, unsafe pedestrian crossing, and gaps in pedestrian infrastructure, do not fully reflect the corridor's residential function. Ferguson Avenue is also a tree-canopy street, and the study will be highly sensitive to preserving the existing canopy.

Chatham County aims to study this corridor to evaluate and improve pedestrian facilities while ensuring roadway safety reflects its function as a neighborhood-serving corridor.

Ferguson Avenue, covering approximately 2.3 miles, functions as both a neighborhood access roadway and a minor arterial between Diamond Causeway and Skidaway Road. Recent traffic data indicates a truck percentage of 5.5 percent, with 4.5 percent consisting of single-unit trucks typically associated with local delivery activity. The study's primary objective is to evaluate traffic operations, roadway design, crash history, and multimodal conditions along Ferguson Avenue. The goal is to identify safety and operational improvements that better serve pedestrians and all roadway users. The study will collect and analyze traffic data, review pedestrian and bicycle conditions, examine lighting and roadway design features, and apply context-sensitive design approaches throughout. All modes of transportation will be considered, especially areas with frequent pedestrian crossings near residential neighborhoods and a grocery store. Public participation will be incorporated to ensure community needs and concerns shape the study outcomes.

The corridor lacks continuous, ADA-compliant sidewalks and clearly defined crossing opportunities. Observed vehicle speeds may further elevate crash-severity risk. This study will establish clear safety and multimodal goals for the corridor and support both short-term and long-term planning efforts through CORE MPO. It will complement broader regional safety initiatives and provide a focused, data-driven framework tailored to Ferguson Avenue's role as a neighborhood-serving corridor. Preservation of the tree canopy will be a guiding design priority.

The comprehensive study will include preliminary cost estimates and a phased implementation strategy, helping to justify future programming of projects in the CORE MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), and positioning Chatham County to pursue state and federal funding.



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Product	Lead Agency/Local Sponsor	Consultants Needed
<p>The study will include a detailed existing-conditions assessment addressing traffic operations, crash patterns, pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, roadway characteristics, and freight activity.</p> <p>The study will develop conceptual multimodal improvement alternatives, accessibility upgrades, freight-responsive design solutions, and context-sensitive design strategies, along with preliminary and phased cost estimates. The final report will provide a prioritized list of short-term projects and a phased implementation strategy. Public participation findings will be incorporated into all recommendations. Drainage conditions and stormwater infrastructure will also be evaluated, with recommendations for resilient improvements included in the proposed alternatives and phased project concepts.</p> <p>Completion of this study will provide Chatham County with a clear, data-driven roadmap to address documented safety concerns, reduce future fatalities and serious injuries, support safe and efficient truck operations, improve accessibility, preserve the tree canopy, and enhance quality of life along the Ferguson Avenue corridor.</p>	Chatham County	Yes

Responsible Agencies:

Organization	Activity
MPC	Study oversight, funding application, RFP development, consultant procurement, project management.
Chatham County	Local sponsor, project management
GDOT and FHWA	Project coordination
Other local agencies	Consultation and coordination.

Funding:

Proposed Funding Source	Amount
FHWA Y410 Funds	\$200,000.00
Y410 Funds Match	\$0.00
TOTAL FUNDS	\$200,000.00



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Bay Street Microsimulation Modeling (PI 0021574)

Project Description: Bay Street is a principal east–west arterial within Savannah’s Historic National Landmark District and serves as a critical corridor for freight movement, tourism activity, and local circulation. The proposed study corridor is approximately 1.3 miles, extending from Fahm Street to East President Street. Traffic volumes within this segment are high, with 2025 Average Daily Traffic volumes of approximately 25,000 vehicles per day between Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Barnard Street and 23,800 VPD between Drayton and Abercorn Streets.

The City of Savannah proposes a microsimulation-based operational and capacity analysis to evaluate existing and forecasted conditions along the corridor. Bay Street’s dual function as a freight route and access corridor to Savannah’s historic downtown creates complex operational challenges, including constrained geometrics, high pedestrian activity, and competing modal demands. Continued degradation of peak period level of service, combined with projected growth in logistics-related traffic and Savannah’s approximately 17 million annual visitors, necessitates a proactive, data-driven planning approach.

This project will develop a calibrated microsimulation model to test multiple operational and capacity improvement scenarios and quantify their impacts on delay, queueing, travel time, and multimodal interactions. The study will provide the City of Savannah with a technical basis for identifying cost-effective strategies that improve freight mobility, enhance pedestrian and multimodal safety, and preserve the functional integrity of the National Historic Landmark District. The results will inform future capital investment decisions and support stakeholder engagement through clear visualization of corridor performance and improvement alternatives.

Product	Lead Agency/Local Sponsor	Consultants
<p>Microsimulation of operational and capacity improvements to address existing and forecasted demand in the unique challenges for Bay Street freight, tourism, and local traffic. Freight movements and the City’s vibrant visitation industry demand that we continually look for ways to mitigate congestion, improve safety, and protect the special nature of Savannah’s Historic National Landmark District.</p> <p>Deterioration of Bay Street’s peak period level of service, and tremendous area growth projected in logistics traffic alone the pressure on Bay Street will continue to grow. Combining freight demand with our 17 million visitors annually as well as downtown workers, many of whom cross Bay Street to access hotels, restaurants, and the ferry service to the Convention Center, makes it critical to be strategic and forward-thinking in planning for the future.</p> <p>To support the engagement of our business and residential community in defining the challenge, a critical first step is a microsimulation planning</p>	<p>City of Savannah</p>	<p>Yes</p>



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<p>effort that considers multiple scenarios to set the foundation for problem-solving.</p> <p>Comprehensive final report, calibrated simulation model files, and visual, animated representation of traffic scenarios. These deliverables will provide detailed quantitative and qualitative data, to provide actionable, prioritized short-term (0-5 years) and long-term (5+ years) projects that will improve the operation and safety of the corridor and justify future programming of projects in CORE MPO's MTP and TIP.</p>		
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Responsible Agencies:

Organization	Activity
MPC	Study oversight, funding application, RFP development, consultant procurement, project management.
City of Savannah	Local sponsor and project management
GDOT and FHWA	Coordination as needed.
Other local agencies	Consultation and coordination.

Funding:

Proposed Funding Source	Amount
FHWA Apportioned Planning Funds	\$144,000.00
Apportioned Planning Funds Match	\$36,000.00
TOTAL FUNDS	\$180,000.00



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Appendix B: Resolution to Amend the FY 2026 UPWP



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Resolution to Amend the FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program of the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

WHEREAS, in accordance with the joint Federal Highway Administration - Federal Transit Administration regulations on urban transportation planning (23 CFR Parts 420 and 450, and 49 CFR Part 613), a Unified Planning Work Program is required to be developed; and

WHEREAS, the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) has been designated by the Governor of Georgia as the Metropolitan Planning Organization for the Savannah urbanized area; and

WHEREAS, CORE MPO did formally adopt the FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) as the official staff work program and budget for the MPO at its regularly scheduled meeting on February 26, 2025; and

WHEREAS, CORE MPO did formally amend the FY 2026 UPWP at its regularly scheduled meeting on April 22, 2026; and

WHEREAS, CORE MPO recognizes that the Georgia PL Funds Review Committee, at its meeting on March 30, 2026 decided to award requested PL funds to conduct two studies - Ferguson Avenue from Diamond Causeway to Skidaway Road and Bay Street Microsimulation Modeling; and

WHEREAS, CORE MPO desires to amend the two studies to the funded portion of the FY 2026 UPWP with scope and cost updates in order to conduct the proposed studies.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization approves the proposed amendments to the CORE MPO FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program as shown in the summary UPWP amendment report with any corrections based upon the motion of April 22, 2026.

CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that the above is a true and correct copy of a Resolution adopted by the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization Board at a meeting held on April 22, 2026.



Chester A. Ellis, Chairperson
Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization



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Appendix C: Grant Award Letter



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Russell R. McMurry, P.E., Commissioner
One Georgia Center
600 West Peachtree Street, NW
Atlanta, GA 30308
(404) 631-1000 Main Office

May 4, 2026

Georgia Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (GAMPO) Board Members

Subject: March 2026 PL Funds Review Committee Meeting

Dear GAMPO Members:

The Department would like to thank you for conducting the PL Funds Review Committee Meeting that was held on March 30, 2026. This letter will serve as official correspondence from the Department acknowledging and highlighting the results of the March 30, 2026, meeting.

Listed below is the approved applications summary with the assigned Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) project identification number (P.I. No.) and cost summary.

- **Cartersville-Bartow MPO – 2055 METROPOLITAN TRANS PLAN (MTP)-CY 2026 CARTERSVILLE UPWP**

Requested \$300,000 (\$240,000 Federal, \$60,000 Local) to develop 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The PL Funds Review Committee voted yes for approval of this application request. The GDOT project ID is **PI 0021570**

- **Hinesville MPO – REGIONAL FREIGHT PLAN UPDATE - FY 2026 HINESVILLE UPWP**

Requested \$250,000 (\$200,000 Federal, \$50,000 Local) to develop the Regional Freight Plan. The PL Funds Review Committee voted yes for approval of this application request. The GDOT project ID is **PI 0021571**

- **Gainesville-Hall MPO – SR 124 CORRIDOR STUDY - FY 2026 GAINESVILLE UPWP**

Requested \$200,000 (\$160,000 Federal, \$40,000 Local) to develop the SR 124 Corridor Study. The PL Funds Review Committee voted yes for approval of this application request. The GDOT project ID is **PI 0021572**

- **CORE MPO – FERGUSON AVENUE STUDY - FY 2026 SAVANNAH UPWP**

Requested \$200,000 (\$200,000 Federal, \$0 Local due to Y410 eligibility) to develop the Ferguson Avenue Study. The PL Funds Review Committee voted yes for approval of this application request. The GDOT project ID is **PI 0021573**

- **CORE MPO – BAY STREET MICROSIMULATION MODELING - FY 2026 SAVANNAH UPWP**

Requested \$180,000 (\$144,000 Federal, \$36,000 Local) to develop the Bay Street Microsimulation Modeling. The PL Funds Review Committee voted yes for approval of this application request. The GDOT project ID for this study is **PI 0021574**

The projects selected totaled \$1,130,000 (\$944,000 Federal; \$186,000 Local) based upon the submitted applications. As a reminder, any MPO that receives supplemental PL funding for planning studies utilizing consultant services must follow all standard applicable Federal, State and Local procurement procedures. Additionally, any MPO that receives supplemental PL funding will need to work with the respective GDOT transportation planner to execute the new separate PL planning study contract. An amendment is required to the respective MPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) placing the associated funds in the funded portion of the UPWP. This specific amendment can be completed administratively or through the respective MPO's standard UPWP amendment process.

The Cartersville-Bartow, Hinesville, Gainesville-Hall and CORE MPOs will need to provide progress status updates at the next GAMPO meeting in September 2026 and in writing to the Department prior to the upcoming meeting. This will enable the PL Funds Review Committee to thoroughly track progress, dollar amounts expended and provide an effective oversight measure.

The Department looks forward to continuing working with the GAMPO members and the MPOs in this process. If you have any additional questions, please feel free to contact Kaniz Sathi at ksathi@dot.ga.gov.

Sincerely,

Matt Markham
Deputy Director of Planning

MM: ks

cc: Ann-Marie Day, FHWA
Megan Weiss, GDOT Planning
Vivian Delgadillo Canizares, GDOT Planning
Kelly Gwin, GDOT Planning
Habte Kassa, GDOT Planning