



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Resolution to Amend the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan of the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization

WHEREAS, the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) desires to adopt an amendment to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan called Mobility 2045 for the CORE MPO transportation planning area; and

WHEREAS, the proposed MTP amendment is to add the Interchange Modification Report (IMR) for the terminus of I-16 at Martin Luther King (MLK), Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street project (P# 0011744, Scoping phases) into Cost Band One; and

WHEREAS, an analysis was conducted, and it was determined that the proposed plan amendment will not negatively impact the financial balance of the 2045 MTP since the funds for the IMR update come from additional revenues made available by congressional earmark; and

WHEREAS, CORE MPO, in accordance with the adopted Participation Plan, has completed a 15-day public review and comment period for the proposed MTP amendment and has addressed all received comments; and

WHEREAS, CORE MPO has conducted a public hearing for the proposed amendment, and has taken into consideration comments made at the public hearing; and

WHEREAS, all requirements of the Participation Plan pertaining to MTP amendments have been met.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT, the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization adopts the amendment to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan as shown in the summary of MTP amendment report with any corrections based upon the motion of the June 28, 2023 meeting.

Approved this day, June 28, 2023.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that appears to read "Chester A. Ellis".

Chester A. Ellis, Chairman
Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization



METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Amendment to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan

June 2023

The CORE MPO's current 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) was adopted by the CORE MPO Board in August 2019. The MTP can be amended as project scopes change or new needs are identified.

According to the CORE MPO's Participation Plan, any proposed changes to the MTP can be sorted into three categories.

- Administrative Modification – 1) Making a minor revision (as defined in GDOT's STIP Amendment Process) to a project that is already in the MTP's financially constrained plan; OR 2) Adding, deleting, or modifying a project in the MTP's vision (illustrative) plan, provided that any added projects come from an adopted study accepted by the CORE MPO.
- One Step Amendment – 1) The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); AND 2) The request **would not** affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan or TIP.
- Two Step Amendment – 1) The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); AND 2) The request **would** affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan (and TIP in many cases).

The key to any MTP amendment is to make sure that the MTP is financially balanced in the impacted cost band after the amendment, impacting both the total project costs and the expected revenues. The MTP amendment process for the proposed project change varies (either two-step or one-step), so it's important to determine what kind of amendment is being pursued.

City of Savannah Request

In March 2023, the City of Savannah was awarded some earmark funds to update the Interchange Modification Report (IMR) for the terminus of I-16 at Martin Luther King (MLK), Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street. The funds need to be programmed in the TIP before the City can access them. The I-16 Exit Ramp Removal project is currently included in the Vision Plan of 2045 MTP, but the IMR needs to be moved to the fiscally constrained MTP before TIP amendments.

The information on the project is listed below.

PREVIOUS WORK ON PROJECT: The CORE MPO completed the original IMR (PI #0011744) in December 2015. GDOT completed the Flyover Analysis and Concept Development Study in 2008.

DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT BACKGROUND, NEED & GOALS: The I-16 terminus at Montgomery Street and associated flyover crossing over Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard (MLK) have been identified as a physical and psychological barrier to economic development, pedestrian connectivity, safety, and neighborhood revitalization along local streets in this area. The benefits of the I-16 ramp removal would be significant and include:

- Reclaiming eight acres of developable land, 650 linear feet fronting MLK, and 350 linear feet fronting Montgomery Street;
- Improve safety for all – drivers, pedestrians, cyclists, transit riders, and others;
- Reclaiming MLK as a major economic mixed-use corridor by reinventing it as a gateway to the City instead of as the edge of downtown;
- Establishing additional connectivity between downtown to Greater West Savannah communities, the Savannah Enmarket Arena, and the redevelopment of the civic center site;
- Creating the opportunity to make Montgomery Street a two-way street;
- Improving traffic flow and walkability with a new street grid; and
- providing civic, business, and affordable housing opportunities in newly created publicly owned land.

The update is required to analyze the project under current and forecasted conditions.

Latest Development

CORE MPO, GDOT and the City of Savannah held a coordination meeting on April 28, 2023 to facilitate the project development. The following agreements have been reached:

- 1) GDOT will take the lead in updating the IMR (advertise for the procurement, follow through with the PDP, etc.);
- 2) the City of Savannah will forward all related materials including the previous IMR for the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal to GDOT and provide the local match funds; and
- 3) CORE MPO will amend the MTP and TIP for the project.

CORE MPO Analysis

The TIP is a sub-set of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and includes the highest priority projects from the MTP. Both the MTP and the TIP must be financially constrained. The requested project is not included in the fiscally-constrained 2045 MTP, so it must be amended into the plan before any TIP amendments can be made. During the coordination meeting, GDOT indicated that the PI# for the previous IMR can be used. The cost estimate and schedule has been determined as follows.

Interchange Modification Report (IMR) for the terminus of I-16 at Martin Luther King (MLK), Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street							
Project ID	Phase Code	Program Year	Fund Code	Total Amount	Federal Amount	State Amount	City Amount
0011744	Scoping	2024	Earmark	\$900,000	\$720,000	\$0	\$180,000

Regarding the 2045 MTP fiscal constraint, since the City of Savannah was awarded the earmark funds and has the local match, inclusion of the scoping phase into the 2045 MTP Cost Band One **will not** impact other projects in this cost band.

Staff Recommendation for June 2023

Based on the analysis above, staff suggest that the CORE MPO approve the proposed 2045 MTP amendment to add the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal IMR (PI# 0011744, Scoping phase) to Cost Band One, making it eligible for inclusion in the FY 2021 – 2024 TIP and the subsequent TIP so that GDOT and the City can start the project development.

Public Involvement

Public participation procedures for MTP amendments include public advertisement, a public hearing, a 15-day comment period, and response to all comments, either individually or in summary form. CORE MPO advertised for the comment period (June 14, 2023 – June 28, 2023) and the public hearing (June 28, 2023) on the Sunday, June 11, 2023 Savannah Morning News. Information about the comment period and the public hearing was also posted on the MPO web site and provided to the media contacts, neighborhood associations, and consultation agencies in the MPO contact database. Verbal comments were addressed on the floor. One written comment was received from the Historic Savannah Foundation in support of the project, and it has been included in Appendix B of this report.

CORE MPO Action

The CORE MPO Technical Coordinating Committee (TCC) endorsed the 2045 MTP amendment to include the Interchange Modification Report (IMR) for the terminus of I-16 at Martin Luther King (MLK), Jr. Boulevard and Montgomery Street (PI# 0011744, Scoping phase) to Cost Band One on June 22, 2023. The CORE MPO Board approved the 2045 MTP amendment on June 28, 2023.

Appendix

- Appendix A: Excerpt of CORE MPO Participation Plan Regarding MTP Amendment
- Appendix B: Public Participation on Proposed 2045 MTP Amendment

Appendix A: Excerpt of CORE MPO Participation Plan Regarding MTP Amendment

Participation for Changes to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

While the MPO updates the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) on a regular schedule, there will be many instances during the cycle when either administrative changes or amendments are required. Generally administrative changes are minor changes which do not alter the original project intent or require financial rebalancing of the plan, while amendments are changes that do have those types of impacts on the plan.

Because the TIP focuses on an immediate four-year time frame, it includes the more active phases of projects, and therefore requests for changes tend to focus on the TIP. However, the longer range MTP is the guiding document. As one can infer from the descriptions of the MTP and the TIP above, the TIP is a subset of projects (or certain phases of projects) listed within the MTP's financially constrained plan. In order to qualify for federal funds, new projects must be consistent with the MTP before they are eligible for inclusion in the TIP. Changes to projects that are already in the TIP (and thus also in the MTP) are documented in an addendum to the MTP.

Any person requesting project revisions, additions, or deletions to the CORE MPO TIP or MTP should send to CORE MPO staff written details of the request, including:

- Project description or changes in existing descriptions;
- Project location and termini or changes in existing location and termini;
- Costs of each phase of the project (new projects) or changes in existing costs;
- Expected authorization year of each phase or changes in those (if the request involves the immediate four-year TIP window);
- Funding sources or changes in funding sources (if the request involves the immediate four-year TIP window);
- Reason for change.

CORE MPO staff may request additional information if needed. Once all of the necessary information is received, MPO staff will use the information to determine whether the request is a TIP administrative modification (according to the description in GDOT's STIP amendment process in Appendix K), a TIP amendment that does not entail an MTP amendment, a TIP amendment that does entail an MTP amendment, or alternatively an MTP amendment that does not affect the TIP.

The guidelines below are used to distinguish between administrative modification and amendments. While most TIP amendments can be accomplished in one MPO meeting cycle (a one-step process), note that MTP amendments require MPO Board action at two separate meetings. TIP amendments which also necessitate an MTP amendment, will therefore require at least two meeting cycles in order to accomplish the necessary MTP amendment prior to action on the TIP amendment. The range of processes described below is intended to allow adequate review of requests, while recognizing that flexibility based on the context of the request will improve efficiency at multiple levels of government.

Procedures for Changes to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) or Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Administrative Modification

The following types of requests are considered administrative modifications to the TIP or MTP, as long as the requested change does not require public review and comment.

- Making a *minor* revision (as defined in Appendix K: GDOT's STIP Amendment Process) to a project that is already in the MTP's financially constrained plan;
- Adding, deleting, or modifying a project in the MTP's vision (illustrative) plan, provided that any added projects come from an adopted study accepted by the CORE MPO.

When the CORE MPO staff determines that the request is an administrative modification, the process consists of the following steps:

- 1) Transmittal of Confirmation: MPO staff transmits a confirmation to GDOT.
- 2) MPO staff posts the updated portion of the document(s) on the MPO web site.
- 3) GDOT sends a monthly list of notifications about administrative modifications to all involved parties, with change summaries sent on a monthly basis to the FHWA and FTA.

Projects that use zero federal funding, and that are not expected to need federal funding in the future, are not required to be included in the CORE MPO MTP or TIP. If a requester nevertheless would like to have these projects listed, then they can be included in an addendum to the MTP, with CORE MPO Board notification. Such projects can be listed in the TIP through an administrative modification.

CORE MPO reserves the right to re-start the change process as an amendment, in cases where it is found that the modification is controversial.

One-step Amendment

The following situations are considered one-step amendments.

- The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); AND
- The request *would not* affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan or TIP.

The process consists of the following steps:

- 1) CORE MPO Board Meeting: At a CORE MPO Board meeting occurring no less than 21 days after receipt of the request, the recommendations of the MPO staff and the appropriate CORE MPO advisory committees will be provided to the CORE MPO Board. A public hearing will be held at that MPO Board meeting, unless held at an earlier date or time. The CORE MPO Board will decide at the conclusion of the hearing whether to reject the proposal, approve the proposal, or approve the proposal with modifications.
- 2) In instances where the project costs or other details differ from those listed in the adopted MTP, the updated project information will be noted in an addendum to the MTP.

Public participation procedures for one-step amendments include public advertisement, a public hearing, a 15-day comment period, and response to all comments, either individually or in summary form. Information about the comment period and public hearing also are posted on MPO web site and provided to the media contacts, neighborhood associations, and consultation agencies in the MPO contact database.

Two-step Amendment

The following situations are considered two-step amendments. The second step of the process may include a TIP amendment as well, in many cases:

- The request is more than a minor revision (i.e. not eligible as an administrative modification); OR
- The request *would* affect the funding or timing of other projects in the MTP's financially constrained plan (and TIP in many cases).

The process consists of the following steps:

- 1) First CORE MPO Board meeting: The CORE MPO staff and the appropriate advisory committees will recommend to the MPO Board whether additional review of the amendment to the MTP is warranted. The CORE MPO Board will then decide either to reject the proposal or authorize further review of the proposal.
- 2) Second CORE MPO Board meeting: If further review is authorized by the CORE MPO Board in the step above, the MPO staff will obtain and review additional information and present its findings and recommendation to the appropriate CORE MPO advisory committees. The recommendations of the MPO staff and the committees will then be provided to the CORE MPO Board. A public hearing will be held at that CORE MPO Board meeting, unless held at an earlier date or time. The CORE MPO Board will decide at the conclusion of the hearing whether to reject the amendment to the MTP, approve it, or approve it with modifications. If the proposal also affects the TIP, then the CORE MPO Board may consider the TIP amendment at this same meeting or at a later meeting.

Public participation procedures for two-step amendments include public advertisement, a public hearing, a 15-day comment period, and response to all comments, either individually or in summary form. Information about the comment period and public hearing also are posted on MPO web site and provided to the media contacts, neighborhood associations, and consultation agencies in the MPO contact database.

TIP Amendment Only

If a project or study that is already consistent with the CORE MPO MTP, as determined by the Executive Director, requires a change that does not qualify as an administrative modification, as defined above, then a TIP amendment can be considered without the need for an MTP amendment. The TIP amendment process requires public advertisement, a 15-day comment period and response to all comments, either individually or in a summary form. There is no requirement for a public hearing. The amendment follows the usual MPO Committee process for action.

The use of federal funds requires completion of the environmental process in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Right-of-way negotiations may not take place until successful completion of the NEPA process. Final location and design of an amended project would be a function of the NEPA process. In Georgia, the Department of Transportation oversees the public participation in the environmental process. The MPO facilitates the participation process by providing early and continuous planning level input and by assisting GDOT in disseminating public meeting notices and project information.

Appendix B: Public Participation on Proposed 2045 MTP Amendment

June 2023

Public Notice for 2045 MTP Amendments

The Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO), the transportation planning agency for the Savannah urbanized area, is requesting the public to review and provide comments on a draft report titled: Amendments to 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). The report includes proposed updates to the 2045 MTP. Copies of the draft MTP amendment report will be available for review at the Live Oak public libraries, the Chatham County - Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) office, the MPC website at <https://www.thempc.org/Core>, and other public review agencies. Any changes to the MTP amendment report will be posted on the website.

The comment period starts on **Wednesday, June 14, 2023**, until the close of business on **Wednesday, June 28, 2023**. Comments are accepted via text, email, or mail. Please send your comments to Wykoda Wang via:

Text: Send texts to wangw@thempc.org

Email: wange@thempc.org

Mail: Metropolitan Planning Commission, 110 E. State Street, Savannah, GA 31401

CORE MPO will host one (1) hybrid public meeting to answer questions and accept comments on the proposed MTP Amendments in conjunction with the June 2023 CORE MPO Board meeting. The public can attend the meeting in person or virtually via Go-To-Webinar. The meeting time, location and link are listed below.

CORE MPO Board Meeting

Wednesday, June 28, 2023

10:00 a.m.

Metropolitan Planning Commission

110 E. State Street, Savannah GA 31401

The virtual meeting will be conducted with Go-To-Webinar, so advanced registration is required. Please register at <https://register.gotowebinar.com/register/8910239251843340886>. After registration, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the webinar.

For a complete list of public review agencies, additional information regarding the draft MTP amendments, and information regarding the virtual public meeting, please call (912) 651-1466.

Disclaimer: The Chatham County-Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission (MPC) and Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (CORE MPO) are committed to the principle of affirmative action and prohibit discrimination against otherwise qualified persons on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, age, disability, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, marital status, familial status, parental status, political beliefs, genetic information, income, or other protected category in its recruitment, employment, facility and program accessibility or services.

MPC and CORE MPO are committed to enforcing the provisions of the Civil Rights Act, Title VI, and all the related requirements mentioned above. CORE MPO is also committed to taking positive and realistic affirmative steps to ensure the protection of rights and opportunities for all persons affected by its plans and programs.

From: sadler@myhsf.org <sadler@myhsf.org>
Sent: Tuesday, June 27, 2023 12:11 PM
To: Wykoda Wang <wangw@thempc.org>
Subject: Public Notice and Support I-16 Flyover Removal

CORE MPO Board:

The I-16 Flyover Removal Coalition wholeheartedly supports amendments to the CORE MPO's 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) updates to include the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal IMR Scoping phase.

Thank you,
Sue Adler on behalf of the I-16 Flyover Removal Coalition

Susan Adler, MA
CEO & President
Historic Savannah Foundation
912-233-7787
912-856-0323 (cell)
www.myHSF.org

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We save buildings, places, and stories that define Savannah's past, present, and future.