



## CORE MPO Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation

Minutes  
October 23, 2023 at 1:00pm

### October 23, 2023 Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation (ACAT)

<b>Voting Members</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Present</b>
Ben Lewis	Chatham County	X
Vacant	Savannah Council of the Blind	
Wayne Dawson	Savannah - Chatham County Fair Housing Council	
Brenda Pollen	Housing Authority of Savannah	
Pala Valdez	Savannah Center for the Blind and Low Vision	X
Carol Hunt	NAACP - Savannah Branch	
Jackie Immel	Georgia Infirmary Day Care Center for Rehabilitation	
Shannon Ginn	Living Independence for Everyone (LIFE), Inc.	X
Patti Lyons	Senior Citizens Savannah - Chatham County, Inc.	
Pamela Oglesby	Savannah - Chatham Council on Disability Issues (SCCDI)	
Tyrone Palmer	National Federation of the Blind, Local Chapter	X
President & CEO	Goodwill Industries of the Coastal Empire	
Representative	Effingham County	
Representative	GDOT District Five	
Representative	Richmond Hill	
Asia Hernton	CORE MPO	X
Clealice Timmons	Coastal Center for Development Services	
Terry Tolbert	Economic Opportunity Authority	X
Tia Baker	Chatham Area Transit	
Vacant	GVRA/Chatham County Coastal Chptr-GA Assoc. for deaf	
<b>Voting Alternates</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Present</b>
Barbara Shiggs	Chatham Area Transit – Para Transit	X
<b>Others</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Present</b>
Pamela Everett	MPC	X
Sally Helm	CORE MPO/MPC	X
Anna McQuarrie	CORE MPO/MPC	X
Wykoda Wang	CORE MPO	X
Jeramie	Member of the public	X
Genesis Harrod	CORE MPO	X

## I. Approval of Agenda

## II. Action Items

### 1. Approval of the August 21, 2023 CORE MPO ACAT Meeting Minutes

Mr Terry Tolbert motioned to approve the August 21, 2023 CORE MPO ACAT Meeting Minutes; seconded by Ms. Paula Valdez. The motion passed with none opposed.

### 2. FY 2024-2027 TIP Adoption

Ms. Wykoda Wang, Director of Transportation Administration, stated that the draft TIP is in the review period and can be found online. It is also available for review at the public review agencies. The comment period started on September 27<sup>th</sup> and will end on October 26<sup>th</sup>.

Some of the highway projects that are included in the draft TIP are listed below. They are sorted by funding sources in the draft TIP.

- PI# 0015704 and 0015705 - Back River Bridge and US 17 Widening
- PI# 0019219 - Talmadge Bridge Maintenance
- PI# 0017414 and 0017415 – US 80 Bridge Replacements at Bull River and Lazzaretto Creek
- PI# 0017411 - I-95 ITS project
- PI# 0019013 - CAT Fleet Replacement
- PI# 0008358 and 0010236 - Project DeRenne
- PI# 0017976 - Garrard Avenue Improvements
- PI# 0017975 - Chevis Avenue Improvements
- PI# 0017515 - I-16 at SR 17
- PI# 0019014 - Ivory and Linwood Sidewalk - Richmond Hill Project
- PI# 0019716 - OCEAN TERMINAL @ CS 2356 /LOUISVILLE RD & @ SR 25/US 17 RAMP

The transit projects are programmed with Sections 5307, 5337, 5339, 5311 and other funds. CAT provided the transit project information.

During the comment period, the MPO was informed that Richmond Hill had already sent a request letter to GDOT to cancel the Ivory and Linwood Sidewalk project and GDOT had deleted it from their system, so this project will be removed from the final TIP.

The Ocean Terminal at Louisville Road project is 100% funded locally by the Georgia Ports Authority. Because this project is not consistent with the 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan, it will not be included in the final official TIP either. In order to include it officially in the TIP, the MPO would have to amend the 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan first, but this is not needed since there will be no need for federal funding. This project will be included in the final TIP just as an illustrative project since it's a regionally significant project.

Another project that is missing from the draft TIP is the I-16 Exit Ramp Removal IMR. Since it was amended to be included in Fiscal Year 2024, it will be included in the final TIP.

Other changes are related to the funding balance. For the Carbon Reduction Program funds, staff did research and found out that sidewalk and bike projects are eligible for these funds. We got confirmation on that from FHWA.

Last year CORE MPO conducted Calls for Projects for Y230 and Y301 funds. Projects allocated funds in FY 2023 and FY 2024 were amended into the FY 2021 – 2024 TIP. Projects applying for funds in later years (2025 to 2027) were included in the waiting list. The MPO used the Call for Projects results as the basis to allocate funds for the FY 2024 – 2027 TIP.

The projects that have funds authorized in Fiscal Year 2023 will not be included in the new TIP.

- State Route 204 Access Study
- State Route 25/US 17 Corridor Study
- President Street Railroad Crossing Elimination Study
- Tides to Town/ Middleground Rd Phase (PE phase)
- I-95 at Airways Ave Interchange Improvements (scoping phase)

The two projects that were awarded Y230 funds in FY 2024 are carried forward into the new TIP.

- CAT Fleet Replacement
- US 80 at Bull River Bridge project

For the projects in the waiting list (FY 2025 – FY 2027), the funding was allocated based on rankings. The process is to use the Y301 funds first, supplement them with the CRP funds, and then use Y230 funds as a last resort. The projects that get funded in these years include Chevis Road Improvements, Garrard Avenue Improvements, and Green Island Road Trail project.

By applying the funding allocation sequence based on project rankings, Chevis Road takes precedence and gets some Y301 funds in FY 2025, but that is not enough. The balance will be made up by the Carbon Reduction Program funds and then Y230 funds. If all of the funds aren't used, the balance will be applied to the second priority projects. This process continued until the MPO staff was able to balance Y301, Carbon Reduction Program and finally Y230 funds.

Currently, project sponsors still have to come up with additional local match funds for their projects. This is the only way that we can balance the program funds. We have some problem with the Y230 funding balance in FY 2025. GDOT indicated that the MPO can request additional funding obligation. If we can request additional funds, we can boost the revenue in the fiscal year 2025. That way, Chatham County doesn't have to spend additional local match funds.

The HIP funds will lapse in September 2024. Right now, we have two projects programmed with these funds. We do need detailed project schedule updates on

the two projects to make sure we can authorize the funds by the deadline, otherwise we could lose the HIP funds.

When the City of Savannah applied for additional Y230 funds (about \$1 million) during last year's Call for Projects, they didn't mention for what phase and what year the funds were needed. Staff assumed they were for additional environmental justice analysis. We need clarification from the city. If the funds are indeed for the PE phase, we do have the balance in FY 2024 to accommodate the request.

Staff is asking the ACAT committee to endorse the proposed FY 2024-2027 TIP with the condition that all of the changes listed above will be addressed.

A motion was made and seconded to endorse the FY 2024-2027 TIP. The motion passed with none opposed.

### **III. Status Reports**

#### **3. CORE MPO MOU, Fee Structure, and Bylaws Adoption**

Ms. Wykoda Wang stated that the MOU document is almost done except for Appendix B which is the MPO membership dues fee structure. We are still waiting on information from the municipalities. For example, Bryan County and Richmond Hill need to tell us how to split their county's share of the membership dues. For Chatham County, we need to get some input from the Chatham County Commission on whether they still are going to pay 25% of the municipalities' share. CAT and the Savannah Airport Commission pointed out that we probably want to have some kind of discussion about the modal authorities' shares. For MOU, Appendix B is the only portion that is not finalized at this point.

Another document is the bylaws. Ms. Wang mentioned that we are trying to be consistent. For example, currently the election cycle varies for different committees. We want to update the bylaws to make sure that all of the committees hold the elections at the end of the calendar year. So, some changes would be consistent election process, standardized quorum requirements, non-voting advisory committees, etc.

Ms. Wang then listed some of the specific changes such as the new Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and the combined CAC and ACAT as the Transportation Equity and Public Involvement Advisory Committee. We want this committee to have a specific mission.

It's expected that the MOU will be adopted in December and the bylaws will be adopted later. We will hold an individual meeting with ACAT to discuss bylaw changes.

## 4. 2050 MTP Update

Ms. Genesis Harrod presented the interest rates and the cost estimating tool for the 2050 MTP financial plan development.

### Interest Rates

The 2050 MTP Financial Plan growth rate is initially deduced by averaging the previous three years' annual inflation rates (2020, 2021, 2022) compiled by the US Labor Department's Bureau of Statistics (BLS). This initial estimate yields an average inflation rate of 4.61%. It is the CORE MPO's opinion that this rate is too high, given the current policies of the Federal Reserve and ongoing economic conditions, to utilize as a growth rate to project future funds. We need to deduce an appropriate agreed upon growth rate to complete the financial section of the MTP. This can be accomplished by comparing interest rates used across other agency plans in the state of Georgia, as well as comparing these to the GDOT base revenue forecast growth rate. An average of those interest rates, or the average of the maximum and minimum rates, could suffice - ARC RTP: 2.2%; Augusta ARTS MPO MTP: 2%; Macon MPO MTP: 2%; GDOT SSTP: 1%; CORE MPO 2045 MTP: 1%.

That's typically what engineers do in traffic data - looking at the interest rate in the future, projecting as far as economics is concerned, looking at Yahoo Finance and all other things inside our business. They're projecting that next year we'll still have higher interest rates. That'll probably ease out in the next five years or so.

Ms. Wang stated we are talking about two interest rates – one for revenue projections and the other for cost estimates. For the long-range transportation plan, we have to do the Year of Expenditure or YOE, so we need both. The highway revenues are normally provided by GDOT, which already have an interest rate embedded. For cost estimates, we use data from CPI, etc. For the current 2045 MTP, the annual revenue interest rate that GDOT used was 1%. For the annual cost estimates interest rate, we used 4%. For example, if we have a project, the right-of-way phase is projected to be in 2030 and we are now in 2023, we have to project the ROW cost estimate to 2030 by applying an annual inflation rate of 4%. The total inflation factor would be probably 20% or something because it has to be in Year of Expenditure dollars. 4.61% might be used for cost estimating, but for revenue, we are not going to have that much.

### Cost Estimates Example for 2050 MTP

Ms. Harrod stated that CORE MPO has obtained a Cost Estimating Tool from the Atlanta Regional Commission (ARC). The ARC tool was established in 2016 and is utilized across the region by the private sector as well as ARC. This tool provides an input for any interest rate. The CORE MPO staff and TCC must determine if the tool provides an adequate estimate of the cost of the facility.

She then demonstrated how to use the tool for the SR 26 at SR 307 Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) project, a recommendation from the US 80 Corridor Study. The SPUI allows improved traffic capacity and operations while utilizing less right-of-way than a diamond interchange. The operational area of the intersection

takes place in the overpass and underpass. The example utilized an interest rate of 2%, Preliminary Engineering year of 2028, Right of Way year of 2029, and Construction year of 2030.

The distance of each leg of the facility within each leg of the intersection was approximated to determine the amount of acreage necessary for the cost estimate. The area of the facility is estimated to require 8.55 acres of approximately 50% commercial and 50% agricultural lands. Usually, this type of facility also includes Intelligent Transportation Systems updates to get better signal timing. The resulting cost estimate including preliminary engineering, right-of-way, construction and contingency was over \$50 million. Staff did a quick comparison around the whole country as far as how much SPUIs cost. The lower bound is \$25 million (Kansas City, MO), mid bound is Savannah, GA - \$50,143,000, and the upper bound is \$73,600,000 (Sherwood, California). Our result is in line with an urban area or soon-to-be more urban area.

Ms. Wang provided some background information. This might be the first time that we are going to add projects to the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Previously we used 1% interest rate for the revenue projections and 4% for the cost estimates. We didn't have enough revenue to cover a lot of projects. We had to cut down a lot of projects. This may be the first time that we might be able to add a project, based on the revenue that will be available and the fact that some big item projects such as I-16 Widening and I-16/I-95 Interchange are out of the way. That makes room for other projects.

We have a matrix for project selection. The matrix is based on recommendations from various studies such as US 80 Corridor Study, SR 307 Corridor Study, Freight Plan, etc. We have a project list. If a project is recommended by multiple studies, it will have a higher priority.

The problem is that the study recommendations don't always include project cost estimates. If some plans such as the Effingham County Master Transportation Plan have both projects and associated cost estimates, we can use their numbers and then adjust them by the inflation factors. If we have a new project but don't have the cost estimate, we will use this cost estimating tool. For example, when Kimley-Horn (consultant) developed the US 80 Corridor Study recommendations, they have the SPUI project, but they don't have the cost estimate. We might have this SPUI project selected in our 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan, but we don't have a cost estimate. What Genesis is doing is just to use the nationwide examples to provide us with some tools so that we can do the cost estimate.

Ms. Harrod stated she has worked on project prioritization methodology as well. She has gone through the ARC project prioritization document which describes how they do their project prioritization and the criteria they use. They also have something called LCIs, which are Livable Centers Initiatives. Mobility and access, equity, safety, resiliency, congestion, quality of life, travel time, etc. are some of the scoring criteria. What we want to do is make a process of our own instead of going off of everything they do.

When we look at projects and score them, we're trying to figure out which projects should be ranked and which kind of prioritization. We want to look at cost-effectiveness, the sponsored priority, who can pay for what, if it's a public-private partnership, if it's going to be something that local communities have to pay into more, regional equity in terms of mobility and access, deliverability, congestion relief, etc.

As far as the Matrix Project selection, it has projects scored as far as how frequently they are found in other plans. If a project is found in two or more plans or three or more plans, it gets more priority than a project that's only found in one plan.

Ms. Wang stated in the next couple of months or the next three months, we are going to delve into the financial plan development. We probably will have special-called TCC meetings or TCC subcommittee meetings just to drill down with all of this information.

## [5. Congestion Management Process 2024 Outline](#)

Ms. Genesis Harrod stated the CORE MPO is updating the Congestion Management Process. The previous CMP was analyzed to create the 2024 version. Sections of the 2017 CMP were reviewed to determine current relevancy and include additional data. The 2024 Congestion Management Process outline has been created and data is in the process of being gathered.

What is the Congestion Management Process? It's to tackle the actual congestion and increase the flow and capabilities of our traffic network to make it safer and more efficient. The CMP is typically updated every five years. The 2024 CMP will include updates and additions to the following metrics.

- Vehicle Delay Hours – how many hours are wasted being stuck in traffic by commuters each year.
- Cost of Congestion – roughly the number of delay-hours in traffic each year multiplied by the average hourly rate of pay for that year.
- Percent of Non-single Occupant Vehicle Travel - for the sake of this CMP update, it will be defined as all multiple-occupant vehicles, as well vanpools and carpools.
- Total Emissions Reductions - This is something that we would look into with resiliency and climate change.
- Access Management Policies – We would look at the GDOT's access management policies. There's not enough access management for Georgia overall. We have a lot of two-way left turn lanes, also called suicide lanes. We don't have a lot of medians. We don't have internal access to different developments. Typically, people just make a right turn from the major thoroughfare instead of going into off-intersection areas or going into roadways that have been designed by the actual developments and going in from there. We don't have a lot of joining and connectivity between different developments. Instead, they keep going to the main roadway and that backs up traffic because everyone's waiting for people to make right turns, which are slower than left turns sometimes.

- Type of Crash - vehicular versus environmental denotes how most crashes occur and whether changes can be made to facilities and/or change driver behavior.
- Pedestrian Propensity Analysis - denotes areas in need of facilities based on heat density; i.e., which areas need to have which type of facilities as far as pedestrians are concerned.
- Pedestrian Level of Service (levels of services for pedestrian facilities) and Bicycle Propensity Analysis (areas in need of facilities based on heat density) - Asia just worked on the different types of multimodal facilities we have and how to increase those. This ties in with that. We could alleviate congestion if we have more greenways and trails that frequent areas that are called activity centers, where people drive to, work at, and go to shop.
- Crash Density versus Bottleneck Locations – safety issues.
- Conflict Points versus Crash Density throughout the study area - denotes conflict points in facilities and safety issues.

Ms. Genesis showed some illustrative examples of conflict points. One example shows the conflict points at intersections. There are different areas where there could be a crash because you have head-on, somebody crossing, making a left turn over, somebody going straight through. These are all different types of conflict points. Another example shows a four-legged intersection versus a roundabout. A roundabout has fewer conflict points. They alleviate the conflict points of a four-leg intersection. A four-leg intersection is where you have somebody going on two major thoroughfares crossing, as in a T, or four quadrants versus a roundabout, which is circular and people could go through and yield in, which continues and do not stop the flow of traffic. Other examples include conflict points on a freeway when you're merging.

The data sources for the 2024 CMP update include GDOT crash data, data from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics, NPMRDS, Georgia ITE, CAT, the CORE MPO Freight Plan, and US Census Bureau.

That's basically what we plan to do for the CMP update. We're adding on areas sections, adding more data and having more information. Data-driven decisions are usually not challenged as much.

## [6. CORE MPO Regional Freight Plan Update](#)

Ms. Wykoda Wang stated for the Freight Plan, we had our last EDFAC Committee meeting last Thursday. The consultant presented the final report. It's a summary of the previous technical deliverables.

We're wrapping up the plan update on October 31st. All the deliverables including the draft technical memos and the draft final report are online. We also web-posted regional modal profiles. This is the information (four pages, one page for each mode) that we can use for public engagement.

The freight plan includes very solid analysis. If you want to talk to your committees or members about freight, you can use that information. Right now, all of the deliverables are in draft form. The consultants are addressing all the comments



that we have received to finalize the technical memos and final report. We will post the final documents online after they are finalized.

## [7. Urban Flooding Model Study Update](#)

Ms. Anna McQuarrie gave a presentation and demonstration of the Urban Flooding Model Study Update. She discussed Financial Stewardship & Resiliency Planning, Sea Level Rise Scenarios, Stormwater Modeling, and Coastal Flood Modeling and Roadway Vulnerability Assessment.

## [8. Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Status Report](#)

Ms. Asia Hernton gave the presentation on the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan update. Staff is continuing to update this plan, and we are asking everyone to send their project lists for this plan so that they can be ranked. If you have a project in mind, please put it in the Excel spreadsheet attached with the status report and send it back to us. Once all of the projects are submitted to us, they will be reviewed by the public, and then scored and ranked by the steering committee.

In addition to listing the projects, PDFs and GIS shape files would also be very helpful with documenting what developments may take place and where. The bike/ped/trail project list is projected to be completed by February 2024. If anyone has any type of project in mind, it'd be great if we could have it by the end of October, or even maybe the beginning of November. This way we could have time to receive public input on the plan as public input is a factor in how the projects are scored and ranked by the steering committee.

In terms of current activities, we're still working on a lot of what we presented last time, which is the origin and destination data, the bike and pedestrian volumes, and the crash data. We are still finalizing that data and hopefully we can have something to present in December, or February at the latest.

We're also delving more deeply into equity-related topics and creating maps that overlay community resources such as schools, grocery stores, and public housing complexes with our existing bike and pedestrian infrastructure. We want to see where our sidewalks and our bike lanes in comparison to some of those community resources are located.

All of this work in the status report will result in a list of specific roads and intersections that need the most safety improvements based on the crash data maps that we showed at the previous TCC meeting. Additionally, it'll describe where more bike and pedestrian infrastructure is needed based on travel volumes, and origin and destination data. The source of that data we also showed at a previous meeting was the Strava Metro data. Then, a map just shows the placement of non-motorized infrastructure in comparison to community features, such as public housing complexes, student housing, schools, grocery stores, libraries, and things like that.

The overall plan is projected to be adopted in June 2024. Her email is attached to this agenda, so the project lists can be emailed to her.

[9. US 80 Corridor Study Status Update](#)

Report attached to the agenda.

**IV. Agency Reports (verbal)**

Mr. Shannon Ginn said with L.I.F.E. reported, they have hired new people. They formed a sub-committee for employment disabilities group. They had a workshop last Wednesday.

**V. Other Business**

**VI. Public Participation Opportunities**

**VII. Notices**

[10. GDOT Project Status Update Report](#)

Report attached to agenda.

[11. Chatham County Project Status Update Report](#)

Report attached to agenda.

[12. City of Savannah Project Status Update Report](#)

Report attached to agenda.

[13. City of Port Wentworth Project Status Update Report](#)

Report attached to agenda.

[14. Savannah Hilton Head International Airport Project Status Update Report](#)

Report attached to agenda.

[15. Chatham Area Transit Project Status Update Report](#)

Report attached to agenda.

[16. LATS-SCDOT Project Status Report Update](#)

Report attached to agenda.

[17. TIP Funding Tracking](#)

Report attached to agenda.

[18. AMPO Conference 2023 Notes and Takeaways](#)

Report attached to agenda.

## **VIII. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the October 23, 2023 ACAT meeting was adjourned.

The Chatham County- Savannah Metropolitan Planning Commission provides meeting summary minutes which are adopted by the respective board. Verbatim transcripts of minutes are the responsibility of the interested party.