



## CORE MPO Board

Minutes  
December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023, at 10 am

### December 13<sup>th</sup>, 2023 CORE MPO BOARD MEETING

<b>Voting Members</b>	<b>Representing</b>	<b>Present</b>	<b>On-Line</b>
Pamela Oglesby	Advisory Committee on Accessible Transportation		
Les Fussell	City of Richmond Hill	X	
Tim Callanan	Effingham County Commission	X	
Nick Palumbo	City of Savannah	X	
Karen Jarrett	Metropolitan Planning Commission	X	
Scott Robider	City of Garden City		
Jim Aiello	Savannah Airport Commission	X	
Deidrick Cody	Chatham Area Transit Board of Directors	X	
Representative	City of Tybee Island		
Beth E. Goette	Town of Thunderbolt		
James Hungerpiller	Town of Vernonberg		
Faye DiMassimo	Chatham Area Transit Authority		
Tom Hutcherson	City of Pooler		
Mayor Van Johnson	City of Savannah	X	
Vivian Canizares	Georgia Department of Transportation		
Jamie McCurry	Georgia Ports Authority		
Armand Turner	Citizens Advisory Committee		
Gary Norton	City of Port Wentworth		
Charles Ackridge	City of Bloomingdale		
Chester Ellis	Chatham County Commission (Chairman)	X	
Dr. Estella Shabazz	City of Savannah	X	
Michael Kaigler	Chatham County	X	
Chair Person	Economic Development & Freight Advisory Committee		
Tanya Milton	Chatham County	X	
<b>Voting Alternates</b>	<b>Representing</b>		
Robert Milie	Town of Thunderbolt		
Ted Hicks	Georgia Department of Transportation	X	
<b>Others</b>	<b>Representing</b>		
Katie Proctor	GDOT District 5		X
Joseph Shearouse	City of Savannah	X	

Audra Miller	Bryan County		X
Joseph Longo	FHWA		X
Deanna Brooks	Chatham County	X	
Ashley Goodrich	Thunderbolt – consultant	X	
Wykoda Wang	CORE MPO	X	
Asia Hernton	CORE MPO	X	
Sally Helm	CORE MPO/MPC	X	
Genesis Harrod	CORE MPO	X	
Jeff Ricketson	LCPC		X
Kaniz Sathi	Georgia Department of Transportation		X
Mary Moskowitz	Chatham Area Transit	X	
Melanie Wilson	MPC	X	
Anna McQuarrie	MPC – Special Projects	X	
Hind Patel	MPC/IT	X	

### I. Approval of Agenda

Mr. Les Fussell motioned to approve the agenda; seconded by Mr. Nick Palumbo. The motion passed with none opposed.

### II. Committee Reports (verbal)

#### ACAT

Ms. Asia Hernton gave the presentation on ACAT stating they met and did not have a quorum. They did go through the agenda items as status reports.

#### CAC

Ms. Asia Hernton gave the presentation on CAC stating they met and endorsed all action items.

#### TCC

Mr. Fussell gave the presentation on TCC stating they met and endorsed all action items. They had elections for 2024, with Ms. Deana Brooks (Chatham County Engineering) elected as Chairperson and Ms. Calia Brown (Bike Walk Savannah) elected as Vice Chairperson.

### III. Action Items

#### [1. Approval of the November 1, 2023, CORE Board Meeting minutes](#)

Dr. Estella Shabazz motioned to approve the November 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 CORE MPO Meeting minutes; seconded by Ms. Tanya Milton. The motion passed with none opposed.

#### [2. CORE MPO 2024 Meeting Calendar](#)

Ms. Wykoda Wang, Director of Transportation Administration, stated for the 2024 calendar the CORE MPO Board will still meet bi-monthly on the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday, except for August. We are advancing the August meeting to the 7<sup>th</sup>, due to adopting the 2050 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) by the deadline. This is to avoid any lapse in funding.

Mr. Michael Kaigler motioned to approve the CORE MPO 2024 calendar, seconded by Mr. Fussell. The motion passed with none opposed.

### 3. Adoption of 2024 Highway Safety Targets

Ms. Wykoda Wang stated that the federal transportation legislations require that all state departments of transportation (DOTs) and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) use a performance-based planning and programming approach as part of the Transportation Performance Management (TPM) program.

As part of the TPM, each state DOT and MPO must adopt targets to strive for within the planning and programming process. State DOTs, local transit authorities and MPOs are required to set targets for a variety of performance measures related to safety, state of good repair and system performance. MPOs have the option to adopt state DOT targets or set their own. MPOs have 180 days from DOT's adoption dates to adopt targets.

The Highway Safety/PM1 targets are updated every year. GDOT adopted the 2024 statewide Highway Safety targets on August 31, 2023. CORE MPO has until February 27, 2024 to set targets for Highway Safety (PM1). We would like to adopt the following GDOT PM1/Safety Targets in December 2023, as the CORE MPO February 2024 meeting will be past the 180-day deadline.

#### **Georgia Calendar Year 2024 Targets for Safety (PM1): Adopted by GDOT (August 31, 2023)**

- **Number of Fatalities** - Maintain traffic fatalities under the projected **1,680** (2020- 2024 rolling average) by 2024.
- **Number of Serious Injuries** - Maintain serious injuries under the projected **8,966** (2020-2024 rolling average) by 2024.
- **Fatality Rate** - Maintain traffic fatalities per 100M VMT under the projected **1.36** (2020-2024 rolling average) by 2024.
- **Serious Injury Rate** - Maintain serious injuries per 100M VMT under the projected **7.679** (2020-2024 rolling average) by 2024.
- **Total Number of Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries** - To maintain the number of non-motorist serious injuries and fatalities under the projected **802** (2020-2024 rolling average) by 2024.

CORE MPO has decided to support the GDOT PM1 targets for 2024. The MPO will reflect supporting the targets through its planning and programming activities. The MPO's System Performance Report will be updated and added to the current 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and FY 2024 – 2027 Transportation Improvement Program as an administrative modification reflecting how CORE MPO is supporting the GDOT statewide targets for the PM1 performance measures.

Staff coordinated with GDOT to address a concern raised by TCC. The language in the attached resolution has been updated to "by the end of 2024" for each performance measure to provide clarification.

Staff's recommendation is to approve supporting the State's adopted targets for PM1/Highway Safety for 2024.

Mr. Kaigler motioned to adopt the State's targets for PM1/Highway Safety for 2024, seconded by Dr. Shabazz. The motion passed with none opposed.

#### [4. Functional Classification/National Highway System Change Request for Jimmy DeLoach Pkwy Extension](#)

Ms. Wykoda Wang stated we have two projects that were under construction several years ago and are now complete. One is extending the Jimmy DeLoach PKWY from US 80 to I-16. The other one is the interchange project at Jimmy DeLoach PKWY and US 80. Both projects are complete. These roads are directly severing the Georgia Ports Authority, as traffic will move from Jimmy DeLoach Connector and State Route 21 to Jimmy DeLoach PKWY and then on to I-16 to move west.

Staff coordinated with the GDOT Office of Transportation Data after last week's TCC meeting regarding this item to get some clarifications. The updated information provided by GDOT is attached to the agenda.

- GDOT is proposing to add Jimmy DeLoach Parkway Extension from US 80 to Pine Barren Road (the Green Line in the attached map) to the National Highway System (NHS) and to the Functional Classification (FC) Roadways as Principle Arterial. This means the roadway will be eligible for Federal dollars.
- GDOT is also proposing that Jimmy DeLoach Parkway between Pine Barren Road and I-16 (the Red Line in the map) be reclassified from Minor Arterial to Principal Arterial. This segment is already on the NHS.

Staff's recommendation is to support the updates to the Functional Classification System and the National Highway System for the proposed roadways as indicated in the attached GDOT letter.

Mr. Fussell motioned to approve the adoption of the proposed GDOT changes, seconded by Ms. Milton. The motion passed with none opposed.

#### **IV. Other Business**

None.

#### **V. Status Reports**

##### [5. CORE MPO MOU, Fee Structure and Bylaws Updates](#)

Ms. Wang stated that we have presented this several times and we had self-imposed the deadlines that we would adopt the MOU in December 2023 and the Bylaws in February 2024. When attending the GAMPO Conference, Ms. Wang talked with FHWA and GDOT and was told that since we are an existing TMA, we do not have a deadline. The key point is that every MPO Member (current and new) agrees to all the details and all the language used in the MOU and Bylaws. Since we are proposing elections for the CORE MPO Board, the MOU will be adopted next year, and we will take this time to educate the new members. We will target to have the MOU adopted in February or April and the Bylaws finalized in June. FHWA thinks that the MPO Board election is major update, so we will need a redesignation.

At the last MPO Board meeting, we were directed to prepare a letter to send to all jurisdictions and current and new Board Members to state the proposed changes including the Membership Dues Fee Structure.

Currently Effingham County agrees to pay for all their municipalities. Effingham County has a voting seat on the MPO Board, but the other municipalities will share one seat.

Bryan County and Richmond Hill have talked about using the population-based methodology for their portion of the membership dues, but Pembroke is still to be determined.

Our current Chairman has the stance that if the Chatham County Commission Chairman stops being the MPO Chairman automatically, then Chatham County does not want to pay the 25% of the municipality share. He asked us to present the scenarios - if we have an election, this is how much you are going to pay; if we do not have an election, this is how much you will pay. We prepared the letter and sent it out, and it is attached to the agenda.

We received comments from the Savannah Airport Commission and CAT regarding CAT's membership dues. Because CAT does not have the same fiscal capabilities as GPA, they suggested that CAT pay less than other modal representatives. We talked with the MPC Executive Director and decided to calculate the Modal Share with 60th percentile for CAT, and 70th percentile for GPA and the Airport.

Please give us your feedback by January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2024. We want to finalize the MOU and are waiting on feedback regarding the Fee Structure.

Mr. Palumbo asked if the Federal Government has any guidelines on our elections for this board. Do they require us to hold elections? Ms. Wang answered they do not have that specific language, but they do encourage us to hold elections. This is one of the recommendations from our certification review. We have researched all 16 MPOs in Georgia and found out that we are the only one who does not have an election for the MPO Board. The other 15 either have rotating seats for smaller MPOs with 3 board members or hold elections for larger MPOs with 38 board members.

Mr. Palumbo asked if Ms. Wang found out in her research how the County pays for their portion. What is the standard? Ms. Wang stated they do not have conditions.

Mr. Palumbo asked for clarity on why we would have to pay to elect our own officers. Chairman Ellis stated he believes it was a county decision, to make sure that everybody participated since they were not paying. It has nothing to do with Federal standards or guidelines; it was a county decision years ago, as we did not want to let finances hinder the participation.

Ms. Melanie Wilson, Executive Director of MPC, stated that is how Chatham County Commission Chairman became the CORE MPO Board Chair and the Mayor of City of Savannah became the Vice Chair. At that time there was a verbal agreement that whoever paid the most dues would hold the Chair. As time has progressed, the County has continued to pay the 25%. However, every time we get recertified, they ask why we do not hold elections. It is not mandatory, but it is very much encouraged by the DOT and Feds. We wanted to be very clear that if things stay as they are, this is what the dues will be. If there is an election, then the dues will go up for Chatham County municipalities. We wanted to send out the letter early enough so that the City Managers and County Manager could adjust their budgets based on what position each City or County took with the issue.

Mr. Palumbo asked for more clarification. He is just a council man from the City of Savannah who wants to abide by the standards set forth and encouraged by the Federal Government to do what everyone else and every MPO across the state is doing. As a voting member of this body, he has to pay additional dues every year just to follow the process that everyone else does. He doesn't want to have to pay more money to hold an election to follow the standard. He believes his municipality (Savannah) would have to pay \$20,000 more a year, just to do what everyone else is doing.

Ms. Wilson stated the difference is this - in the other counties, the local jurisdictions pay their whole dues. For example, the local jurisdictions would be paying the \$33,000, looking at Bryan County's total. In Chatham County's case, the County has supplemented the jurisdictions during this period of time. The County is saying they will no longer supplement the difference and people will be expected to pay what their dues actually are. Look at it from the standpoint that there was a supplement that the County was paying, and now the County is not going to pay it anymore with regards to the election process.

Chairman Ellis stated while it's not identical, it is the same issue that they are dealing with land use and planning county-wide. It is his belief that municipalities need to be part of the MPC, then we would have better land use and more equality throughout the County.

Mr. Kaigler stated we would also have a standard. Right now, we do not have a standard as all municipalities are not paying into the MPC. We need to reclarify about having an election versus not having an election. We could have elections. What the County has said is that they are going to continue to supplement the 25% while they elect Chairman from the County and the Mayor from the City. What we don't want to happen, for example, is the situation with the Georgia Ports Authority because they have not been participating and now GPA will be participating. We want to get everyone to the table, so we can have an honest dialogue about how things are throughout the whole County. We can still have elections, but if we are going to change, then the other Counties and Municipalities also have to agree to the changes.

Ms. Wang stated she thinks the election also would be good, as we are adding in new members in Bryan and Effingham Counties. Now we have to make this decision.

Mr. Fussell stated he believes the due's 25% is limited to Chatham County, and it doesn't impact Richmond Hill, or new members in Bryan County or Effingham County. If he wanted to be the Chairperson for the MPO, because of the way the Bylaws are written, he is not eligible because it automatically defaults to the Chatham County Commission Chairperson and the Mayor of Savannah. He believes that is incorrect, as he does have ambitions, and there could be someone in Effingham County who wants to step up as well. He believes we are all qualified as we have been on the MPO and TCC boards for a long period of time. He thinks the elections should be held, so that everybody has the opportunity to be nominated. That opportunity needs to be there and it needs to be clarified. He can't make a decision on whether Chatham County and the municipalities having to pay more. He believes having the opportunity for other people to chair this committee and represent this region is vital. He does not care what other MPOs are doing; he is more worried about our MPO and the decisions we make. Richmond Hill does not require Bryan County to help with dues, and they have been paying for years. As their population goes up, they will pay higher dues. If Pembroke wants to be part of CORE MPO, they have to pay their dues. The same goes for municipalities of Chatham County. Vernonburg is probably the least represented here at this MPO, and they also have the least amount that they pay due to their population. He believes we should change the Bylaws so everybody can have a fair chance to fill the positions.

Mr. Palumbo stated that it is an easier decision to make when the difference is only \$17 a year. For the City of Savannah, we are talking approximately \$20,000 per year, and he is accountable to the residents who are paying in. He believes the standards are important. The Federal Government doesn't imply or encourage. Very often, it's either 'you are in or you are out'. He wants to make sure the standards are in place, so that we are abiding by what every other MPO is doing. He believes our job and our chief duty is to harness the Federal dollars and get them down to coastal Georgia. If there is impediment in the leadership or there is a Bylaws change that adds another hurdle to the process, that leads to our losing dollars to Atlanta. He wants to make sure we are doing everything to avoid that. That is what he cares about - abiding by the standards, doing it by the book, following the rules and paying the fair share.

Ms. Wang stated please send an official response letter by January 19<sup>th</sup>, so that we can finalize the MOU. Mayor Johnson (Vice Chairman of CORE MPO) asked the staff to clarify that the letter is coming from the municipalities, not the individual members. Ms. Wang stated that is correct.

Chairman Ellis stated it has to say whether they agree with the MOU totally and all the language that is in there.

Ms. Wilson stated for clarification, in the letter, we need to have something that gives each jurisdiction's position in regard to the Bylaws which is associated with the MOU. We need the clarity, so that we can

finish our part that goes to the State. If the MPO members can encourage their elected officials or the County/City Managers to try to meet the January 19<sup>th</sup> deadline, we can push things along.

Chairman Ellis stated for clarity, we call it a ding, but it does not stop us from getting any federal monies because we don't have an election. To clarify, money doesn't go to Atlanta instead of Bryan, Chatham, or Effingham Counties, because we don't have elections. They aren't even saying you have to do it or you don't have to; they are just encouraging us to have elections. Make sure your letters are received by January 19<sup>th</sup>, so we can finalize the MOU.

Ms. Wilson stated after that we will send a final formal document to the jurisdictions, to have their elected officials sign, so that everybody has the same document.

Ms. Wang stated if we can finalize the MOU including the Appendix B - Fee Structure, we will present it to the MPO Board for approval, then we send the MOU to all the jurisdictions to be signed. There is an individual signature page for each jurisdiction in the MOU.

Chairman Ellis asked how many municipalities, including Bryan and Effingham Counties, are changing members to the MPO Board because of the recent election. Ms. Wang answered for Richmond Hill and Effingham County, they are already on. We included Bryan County and Pembroke and they have their own signature pages. Rincon, Springfield, and Guyton as well. Chairman Ellis stated he is talking about members on the MPO Board now, who is changing? Mr. Fussell stated he is changing. This is his last MPO meeting. He chose not to run for reelection. He has served Richmond Hill for 20 years and is ready for a rest. Chairman Ellis asked if Mr. Fussell knows who is going to replace him. Mr. Fussell stated Mr. Steve Scholar. Steve has served in Bryan County as Planning and Zoning Director, also in Richmond Hill as Planning and Zoning Director. He is currently filling a position in Pembroke for planning and zoning, so he has plenty of experience.

Ms. Wang thanked Mr. Chairman and Ms. Wilson for clarifying the Chairman's question. If he was asking if the total number of board members would change, the answer is no. Currently the CAC Chairman and ACAT Chairman are voting members, but they never show up. We are consolidating those two committees into one, and they will play an advisory role. Those two seats will be replaced by one from Bryan and one from Effingham, so the total number of MPO voting members will not change.

Chairman Ellis stated but the persons who serve will change. Vice Chairman Johnson stated the City of Savannah might have a member change. Chairman Ellis stated since staff wants everyone to agree by January 19<sup>th</sup>, that means any new members or new persons need to be bought up to par.

Mr. Tim Callanan, Effingham County Commission, stated to clarify, when he communicates with the cities in Effingham, even though there are 3 cities that essentially share one seat, they all have to show support for the change with regards to the MOU? Ms. Wang stated that is correct.

Mr. Callanan asked when it comes to the vote, the actual physical vote, it is the current board configuration that votes? He believes it would have to be. Ms. Wang stated we hope to have the new board start operating in August. The first major task would be the 2050 MTP. Mr. Callanan stated in that case, the new seat will not take effect until next August. Ms. Wang stated that is correct.

Chairman Ellis stated he had to straighten that out for member Deidrick Cody (CAT Board of Directors), as Mr. Cody was uncertain if he needed to be here or not. He was informed to come so that we could have a quorum. The new structure has not taken affect until next year. Then the new structure will say who's here, who's not here. He wanted to make that clear.

## 6. 2050 MTP Update

Ms. Wang stated that CORE MPO staff have addressed all GDOT comments regarding the 2050 Socio-Economic data. The updated version has been accepted by GDOT and consultants. The finalized 2050 SE data will be used in the future scenarios of Travel Demand Model.

Contributing Plans and Studies - Several contributing plans and studies that will feed into the 2050 MTP have been wrapped up.

- CORE MPO's Regional Freight Transportation Plan – final deliverables are posted online.
- CORE MPO's Urban Flooding Model Study – final deliverables are posted online.
- Pooler's US 80 Corridor Study – the final report is posted online.
- CAT's Master Transit Plan – the final report is posted on the CAT website.

The draft matrix incorporating the recommendations from these studies and the previously completed studies (SR 307 Corridor Study, SR 21 Access Management Study, etc.) is attached.

Several plans and studies that will feed into the 2050 MTP are in the development process.

- CORE MPO's Non-Motorized Transportation Plan – in project solicitation and compilation process.
- CORE MPO's Congestion Management Process – in progress.
- Chatham County's SR 204 Access Study – study kicked off.
- Chatham County's US 17/SR 25 Corridor Study – will kick off soon.
- Chatham County's President Street Railroad Crossing Elimination Study – will kick off soon.

Resiliency Planning - CORE MPO staff are using the FHWA Vulnerability Assessment Scoring Tool (VAST) to conduct resiliency planning and is working on establishing the VAST Assessment Team to guide the analysis.

Public Engagement - CORE MPO staff are conducting the 2nd round of public involvement. The focuses are the 2050 MTP update status report, study analysis and findings, and collection of further public input. Activities include the following.

- Community Events – Skidaway Island State Park (10/21/2023) and Daffin Heights Community Garden (10/28/2023)
- Presentation – Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition (CGIC) Meeting (11/14/2023)
- CORE MPO Public Meeting – Virtual/In Person hybrid (12/7/2023)

Financial Plan Development - CORE MPO staff presented on the inflation factors and cost estimating tool at the October – November meetings. The revenue projection request has been sent to GDOT, but no response has been received yet. A TCC sub-committee is being established to guide the financial plan development.

Final Plan Adoption - The calendar has been set on August 7, 2024 for final 2050 MTP adoption.

Chairman Ellis asked a question on the I-16 widening. He thought the current phase was going to Pooler Pkwy and the next phase is going from I-95 to State Route 67 in Bulloch County. Ms. Wang stated the next phase is the recommendation from the Coastal Empire Study, which covers 4 counties including Bulloch. When we program projects, we would not extend that much, because we cannot spend money outside of our boundary. If we adopt this project in the 2050 MTP, our limit would be in Bryan or Effingham County; we will not extend to Bulloch County. This is where we get the idea that something is needed, but our segments wouldn't be the same.

Chairman Ellis asked what GDOT had proposed in its Coastal Empire Study. Ms. Wang stated if we do decide to have this project included in our plan, we will have revenues for our portion and GDOT would have the state funds for the portion outside of our boundary. Chairman Ellis stated because Bryan, Chatham and Effingham Counties are in our jurisdiction, GDOT would pick up at the end of Bryan County going into Bulloch County. They would coordinate. Ms. Wang stated Yes, GDOT would coordinate, but the funding sources would be different depending on whether the segments are inside or outside of the MPO boundary.

Ms. Milton asked a question about the State Route 204 widening. It states the widening is going from Old River Road and I-95. Is anything going to happen between Georgetown and I-95? Ms. Wang answered that Chatham County is doing a study right now, so we will find out. Ms. Milton stated this says the Coastal Empire Study. Is that a result of the study that Chatham County was doing? Ms. Wang stated No, because Chatham County just kicked off their study on our segment of State Route 204. We have to find out what will happen. She believes the study recommendation will come after we adopt the 2050 MTP. If we do have the revenue, we might amend our plan to accommodate the recommendation from the study. Very likely for the 2050 MTP, we will not have anything specific for that segment.

Chairman Ellis stated we are talking about two different studies - the Chatham County study and the GDOT study for the Coastal Empire. Chatham County is studying the segment from Georgetown on SR 204 on out. Ms. Wang stated Chatham County just kicked off that study. If we had that study done earlier, we would have specific recommendations about what needs to be done. If we have the revenue, the study recommendation could possibly be amended into the 2050 Plan later. Or we can include the study recommendations into the next 2055 Plan.

Mr. Callanan asked a similar question for Old River Road. How are we handling it if the boundaries set by one study conflict with the boundaries set by another? He disagreed with the Coastal Empire Study limiting Old River Road just from SR 204 to I-16 when we felt it should go all the way to US 80. If we wanted to change the boundaries on the Old River Road widening, it wouldn't check the box because these are different boundaries based on what study you are looking at. Ms. Wang stated the project list is for our reference for project selection. When we develop the 2050 Plan, the projects that we include will have a specific limit. Our limit might be different from these. We are using these more as references.

Mr. Callanan stated when the MPO presents the final project list for 2050 MTP, this project could have a different boundary then. Chairman Ellis asked because Effingham County is a part of the MPO and is also in the Coastal Empire Study, could they ask GDOT to include the rest of it? They would need to have that conversation with GDOT. That is why we had a meeting with elected officials from all over our area and GDOT - to pull out those things and go to GDOT specifically. Ms. Wang stated the Coastal Empire Study has already wrapped up. Chairman Ellis stated the Coastal Empire Study covered Old River Road for a portion but it didn't go all the way to US 80. He thinks Effingham County should go to GDOT to get them to extend it all the way to US 80. Ms. Wang stated she does not believe that Effingham needs to go to GDOT. They can come to the MPO. We are working on the 2050 Plan. Even if the Coastal Empire Study does not include that segment, our Congestion Management Process update or travel demand model might include that segment. The MPO defines the segments we want to make improvements to, not GDOT. GDOT can say 'include the project into the 2050 Plan, and the next step is including the project into the TIP.'

Mr. Callanan stated that just because we changed the boundaries of the project, it doesn't uncheck any of these boxes. Extending the project to US 80 would keep the Coastal Empire Study, Regional Freight Transportation Plan, and the CORE MPO TIP all in place, because the MPO is changing the boundary.

Ms. Wang stated these projects listed in the matrix are recommendations from the studies. Once it all becomes official, it's what's included in the 2050 MTP that counts. Finally, the programming part of it (the TIP) is when we really see what a project will look like. These are just recommendations.

Chairman Ellis stated Yes, they will stay recommendations until GDOT puts the funding in place. GDOT is asking for the money, but they do not have it yet for the Coastal Empire Study. He hopes everybody understands that. The plan they came to show us about the Coastal Empire, GDOT is asking for 1.4 trillion but do not have that yet. This is their recommendation to the State to get your recommendations in. Once they get the money and lock it in, if your recommendation is not in, you are locked out.

Ms. Wang stated GDOT will only implement the project if we include it in our Long-Range Plan and TIP.

## 7. Non-Motorized Transportation Plan Status Report

Ms. Asia Hernton, CORE MPO Staff, stated that staff is continuing to work on the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan. This plan is a document that addresses the development of bike and pedestrian infrastructure in the CORE MPO planning area.

One of the goals of the Non-Motorized Transportation Plan is to compile a list of pedestrian and bicycle projects that can be incorporated into the Metropolitan Transportation Plan and eventually be prioritized and programmed for implementation. Current activities related to updating the project list include:

- Communicating with the local governments, agencies, and organizations to know what should be included.
- Researching plans from local governments (such as comprehensive and development plans) to update the list.
- Analyzing findings from large datasets (Numetric, Strava, ACS) to make project suggestions and recommendations.
- Reviewing public input to make project recommendations.
- Reviewing recommendations from local transportation studies.

Examples of where staff is sourcing projects for the list are attached to the agenda. The project list is projected to be completed in February 2024. The plan is projected to be adopted in June 2024.

## 8. CMP Status Update

Ms. Genesis Harrod, CORE MPO Staff, stated the majority of the data has been gathered for the CMP Update. Sections like the Non-Motorized Transportation section and Freight section will rely on fresh data from Ms. Asia Hernton and the updated Freight Plan (which is still in draft status). Those sections will be worked on this month. Sections such as the Congested Corridors section and Travel Characteristics sections are currently being analyzed and completed, including the Existing Conditions section. The CMP Update is still on track to be completed early January with the schedule outlined below:

### CMP Schedule

- Gather Data: 10/04/2023
- Analyze Data and Write CMP: 10/23/2023
- Submit CMP Draft for Internal CORE MPO Review 1/3/2024
- CMP Draft Internal and External Review: 1/15/2024

Ms. Wilson asked Ms. Harrod to explain what the Congestion Management Process is to our new members.

Ms. Harrod stated we all know I-16 is under construction. We have a lot of roadways under construction. The Congestion Management Process puts together all the roadways with the most congestion. She looks at data across the area of the study - Effingham, Bryan, and Chatham Counties. She looks at some of the other sections like biking and pedestrian, and how to get people to work faster. We want to look at roadways under a lot of congestion and how to manage that congestion, whether it be signal timing

updates, or projects to change the actual infrastructure of the facility (facility is what we call the roadway sometimes). It can be an interchange, an exit ramp, adding crosswalks, etc. We want to make sure the roadway accommodates all users and they can travel safely and efficiently.

Ms. Milton asked if there are any other recommendations for a specific location - she has issues with the signal timing at Cottonvale and US 17. It's a left turn lane, but you can only get 3 cars out.

Ms. Harrod stated usually those recommendations are for the 2050 MTP update. What we like to do is find out what kind of congestion is on the roadway. Just because the light has a bad signal, it doesn't mean it's congested. It could be that the timing is off, so that cars are in places they shouldn't be or cars can't cross the road. The congestion is where you have too much demand for one roadway. For example, we find alternative routes or if we can fix a route. For just one signal, that would be more for the 2050 MTP update. She is not sure if there is a signal plan for Chatham County. It's not that she does not want the suggestion, but she has to figure out how to incorporate it into everything.

## 9. Draft FY 2025 UPWP

Ms. Wang stated she will give a brief update as the draft document is almost 100 pages. The Unified Planning Work Program is basically the staff budget for FY 2025 which starts on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2024 and ends on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2025. It outlines what we do and how much money we have to pay for that service. Three funding sources support the MPO activities:

- Highway Planning Funds called PL, from FHWA and passing through GDOT Planning
- Y410 funding is for Complete Streets, for bicycle and pedestrian planning
- Section 5303 Transit Planning funds, from FTA and passing through GDOT Intermodal

For all 3 funding sources we need a 20% local match, except for Y410 - because it is such a small amount, a lot of MPOs don't want to use it because it's a burden. In order to encourage the MPOs to use the money, FHWA waived the local match requirements. Y410 is 100% federal funded, but with PL and 5303 there is a 20% local match required. That is why we talk about membership dues; this is what the dues cover.

The transit funding will be approximately \$189,000. We haven't received the revenue from GDOT on the highway portion, so we will assume last year's level of funding. For the highway money, we have about \$545,000. GDOT is still revising the PL formula, so we don't know how much our final amount will be. This is based on last year's numbers. In total we have about \$792,000.

What are we going to use the money for? Here are the major tasks the staff will work on.

- Continue the update of the 2050 MTP as an "in house" effort. Complete the 3rd round of public involvement. Complete the 2050 MTP public review and comment period and incorporate all received comments. Adopt the 2050 MTP in August 2024. Finalize all chapters and appendices. Develop a graphic driven Executive Summary and translate it into the required LEP languages (including Korean). Make copies of the 2050 MTP document for distribution and web-posting.
- Maintain and update the FY 2024 – 2027 TIP through amendments and administrative modifications. Conduct Call for Projects as needed in support of the TIP updates.
- Work with FHWA, FTA and GDOT to complete the federal certification review process.
- Monitor the rule-making process and implement the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA).
- Coordinate with planning partners in conducting and/or completing the special transportation planning studies and make sure the recommendations feed into future MTPs.
  - SR 25/US 17 Corridor Study
  - SR 204 Access Study
  - President Street Railroad Crossing Elimination Study
  - I-16 Exit Ramp Removal IMR

- ARP, AOPP and SMART grant funded studies
- Collaborate with GDOT and transit providers on Performance Management and Performance Targets. Activities can include but are not limited to:
  - Continue to adopt the Performance Targets – Transit Safety and Transit Asset Management (CAT), and Highway PM1, PM2 and PM3 targets (GDOT).
  - Develop specific written provisions for PM1, PM2, PM3, transit safety and TAM performance measures as needed.
  - Update the System Performance Report to incorporate the performance targets.
  - Update CORE MPO's Metropolitan Planning Agreements as needed.
  - Link investment priorities to the achievement of performance targets.

There are several unfunded studies listed in the draft UPWP. The Federal Highway Administration and GDOT require that we have at least two rounds of discussion at the TCC for special studies before any funding application. We had our first round of discussion at last week's TCC meeting. The 2nd round will be in February 2024 before adoption of the final UPWP. If we apply for discretionary PL funds, grant money, or other funding resources and receive the funds, we will move the studies from the Unfunded section into the Funded section.

#### CORE MPO Studies

- Resilience Improvement Plan - this is related to the PROTECT grant funding. If we apply for the PROTECT grant for the plan development and get the funding award, it would be 100% federally funded. If we do have a plan when we apply for the PROTECT grant funds for a project, we will provide less local match. Instead of 20%, it will be 10% local match. We might pursue this.
- Another one would be the Urban Flooding Model Study Phase 2, as we have expanded to Bryan and Effingham Counties.
- Following the Freight Plan, we might pursue funding for the Regional Truck Parking study.

#### Chatham County Studies

- Islands Expressway Between Truman Parkway and US 80
- Old River Road Operational and Capacity Improvements - Chatham and Effingham Counties are coordinating on the Old River Road project being included into the 2050 Plan and TIP, so this study might not be needed in the final UPWP.

#### Effingham County Study

- US 80 Corridor Study Phase II - Effingham wants to complete a study on US 80 extending west from Chatham/Effingham County line.

#### CAT Studies

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

Besides these listed studies, the Coastal Georgia Indicators Coalition would like to see an inventory of sidewalks and crosswalks conditions and tracking on how those projects are implemented.

All of these are unfunded studies, and we might pursue funding application for some of these.

Ms. Faye DiMassimo, with CAT, stated she spoke with her Chief about the Bus Amenities Study. The comprehensive scope of that study includes more than what is in the current study. People may have

heard and are participating in some of the inventory work going on right now, and she wanted to clear up any confusion. They do have a comprehensive inventory of all 11,000+ stops and shelters in the county. They are developing the inventory into a GIS-based layer for management purposes. It includes a comprehensive condition of the status so CAT can use it for prioritization and budgetary improvements for improving stops and shelters.

Ms. Wang mentioned she had the preliminary draft of UPWP attached to the agenda. She requested that staff members of our planning partners take a look and if they have the scope, please send it to her. For example, Effingham needs to send the scope for the US 80 Corridor Study Phase II and cost estimate to be included in the UPWP, as we need to send it to GDOT and FHWA for review for the next 30 days. Please try to send the information by the end of this week, so that she can send the draft document for FHWA/FTA/GDOT review next week.

Ms. Wang continued to explain this is how we allocate the resources to the various tasks (budget).

- Administration - covers meetings, Certification Review, Performance Based Planning, etc.
- System Planning - covers 2050 Plan update, the TIP maintenance, etc.
- Public Involvement – covers public outreach, website, etc.
- Data Collection, Analysis and Forecasting – covers SE data, TIA, etc.
- Increasing Safe & Accessible Transportation (Complete Street) – covers Non-Motorized Transportation Plan development and implementation, managed by Ms. Hernton.
- Transit Planning - under administration, it will support the meetings and Federal Certification Review; Long-range Transportation Planning will cover the 2050 MTP update; Short-range Planning will cover the AOPP and ARP funded and the Micro Transit study (coordinating with CAT); and TIP will cover the Transit part of the TIP.
- Special Studies - coordinating with Chatham County and the City of Savannah.

Ms. Wang then summarized the FY 2025 UPWP development process.

- We conducted the Call for Plans and Studies in August for the UPWP.
- We completed the grant application for Section 5303 funds in September.
- We developed the draft UPWP in November and this is the first time we are presenting it.
- The next step is for FHWA and GDOT review in December 2023 – January 2024.
- After we incorporate all the comments, we will present the revised draft for review in February 2024 for final adoption.
- After approval of the FY 2025 UPWP from FHWA, we will sign the contracts, and then we have a new budget.

Chairman Ellis asked about the Unfunded projects - are they still on-going? Ms. Wang stated the Unfunded projects are newly identified needs. If we have the staff capability, we might pursue them or assist our planning partners to pursue them. For example, Effingham County wants to extend the US 80 Corridor Study. We might apply for the discretionary PL funds on behalf of Effingham, but they would be the project manager.

Chairman Ellis asked members from Bryan and Effingham a question about the Phase 2 US 80 Corridor Study. Doesn't US 80 go through both Bryan and Effingham Counties? Mr. Callanan, Effingham County, stated they are trying to determine what boundary to have for Phase 2. US 80 crosses the Ogeechee River and they are thinking US 280 would be a good stopping point. They will discuss it with Bryan County. Chairman Ellis stated it goes back to his example of widening US 80 to 4 lanes and then you get to the 2-lane bridge. US 80 runs all the way to Bulloch County, which means it covers Bryan and Effingham. He asked that they all get together on deciding that. Mr. Callanan stated that Bryan County may want to extend Phase 2 even farther. They will get together.

Chairman Ellis stated that GDOT does bridge studies for strictly State or Federal Highways. In Chatham County, we are in the midst of them doing both, for the widening of Quacco Rd and Little Neck Rd since they all cross I-95. Therefore, we have to work with GDOT to get the Feds to say Yes. That has not come forward as it is in the conversation phase. If it's a federal bridge, we cannot touch it without talking with the Feds.

#### 10. 2020 Census Urban Area Boundary Adjustment - Savannah

Ms. Wang stated after each Census the DOTs in coordination with the MPOs have to update the roadway functional classifications. Before the DOTs update the classification, they have to define an Adjusted Urban Area. They use the latest Census information to smooth the boundaries in the Urban Area. Every roadway within the Adjusted Urban Area boundary will be classified as Urban, outside of the boundary the roadways will be classified as Rural. The difference is that Urban sections require more money for maintenance. If GDOT does not have that much money, they would prefer to classify as little as possible as Urban, so the Rural portion would be bigger.

Attached to the agenda is the letter and map sent from GDOT. The shaded portion is the Census defined Urban Area for the Savannah region. GDOT has smoothed the boundaries to the nearest intersections. The red line delineates the Adjusted Urban Area for Savannah. This is completely different from the CORE MPO Metropolitan Planning Area Boundary. This is only for the purpose of roadway functional classification. All the roadways within the red boundary, including I-95, will be classified as Urban, outside will be Rural. On the attached maps there is comparison between the CORE MPO MPA Boundary and Adjusted Urban Area boundary for Savannah, and also the comparison between the 3 counties and the Adjusted Urban Area.

It does not matter whether we agree or not, as GDOT has adjusted the boundary and sent us a letter for our signature. We reviewed the methodology and agreed with GDOT. Ms. Wilson has already signed the letter. This was to present the information for reference and address questions if asked.

### **VI. Information Reports (verbal)**

#### 11. GDOT Project Status Update Report

Ms. Katie Proctor, GDOT District 5, presented the GDOT report.

##### Preconstruction Status

- PI# 0019219, SR 404 SPUR at Talmadge Bridge – moving along, working on environmental documents and the state coordination is on-going. The general contractor bid opening is today.
- PI# 0015151, Safety improvements of State Route 204 from State Route 21 to Rio Road – PCFR is in progress and the next major milestone is PFPR.
- PI# 0015675, Safety improvements on I-16 at Chatham parkway – continues to hold for LET.
- Twin projects of PI# 0015704 and PI# 0015705 which are replacement of Back River and the widening - preliminary design is ongoing, working towards PFPR.
- PI# 0017414 and PI# 0017415, Bull River and Lazaretto Bridge replacements - we are still waiting on the environmental tech studies and waiting on the draft environmental document.
- PI# 0018023, the roundabout on SR 30 and Hodgeville Rd – PFPR will be submitted in January, proposing right of way authorization in November of 2025 and LET in 2026.

##### Construction Status

- All of our projects are progressing.
- PI# 0013727, I-16 at SR 307 DDI – open to traffic last Sunday. Ongoing paving work along I-16 ramp, ties in, and concrete paving for ramp widenings.

- PI# 0013741, SR 25 at Savannah River in Port Wentworth Bridge Replacement – 17 of 26 splints are completed. The in-water work construction has begun and construction of the temporary work bridge is on-going at Middle River Bridge.

## 12. Chatham County Project Status Update Report

Ms. Deana Brooks, Chatham County, presented the County report.

- PI# 01017515, I-16 at Jimmy Deloach Pkwy Interchange – had the constructability review last week.
- PI# 0017975, Chevis Road Improvements – going forward, the next step will be the public information open house which is planned for February.
- PI# 0017976, Garrard Ave Improvements – next step is preliminary field plan review.
- PI# 0019015, Green Island Road Path – still going along.
- Studies of SR 25, SR 204, and President St at Truman RR – have the PFAs signed, hoping to issue Notice to Proceed on the projects soon.
- Quacco Rd Widening Project – changing from 3 lanes to 4 lanes, additional engineering work is being done.
- Walthour Rd Slope Stabilization – having additional engineering to look at methods for construction.
- Projects currently under construction – all are proceeding as expected.

## 13. City of Savannah Project Status Update Report

Mr. Joseph Shearouse, City of Savannah, presented on the City projects.

- Project DeRenne – in November we had a productive meeting with FHWA and GDOT. We have a clear path forward updating public engagement items in order to receive the Record of Decision for the project. It is vital to receive that Record of Decision so we can move forward with Right of Way acquisition and have the project moving forward.
- DeLesseps Ave – construction is on-going between Waters Ave and Truman Pkwy. Underground utility work continues to progress on a block-by-block method and will continue for the next two months.
- Truman Linear Trail Phase II-B (segment of Tide to Town) – it was put out for an RFP for the construction and the bid closed this past week. We are in the middle of scoring the proposals and expect to have an award within the next 30 days.
- Middle Ground Rd (segment of the Tide to Town) – the design RFP has been released, and we expect to award the contract within the next 60 days.
  - Recently the City of Savannah hired Tina Buckholdt as the Tide to Town manager; she worked with Chatham County and GDOT.
- I-16 Exit Ramp Removal IMR - City Council approved an MOA between City of Savannah and GDOT to update the interchange justification report that will help determine the feasibility of the removal of the ramp and the impact on safety measures and traffic movement throughout the greater Urban street grid.

## 14. City of Port Wentworth Project Status Update Report

Report attached to the agenda.

## 15. Savannah Hilton Head International Airport Project Status Update Report

Mr. Jim Aiello, Savannah Airport Commission, presented the Airport report.

## Project Updates

- SAC 30566 – SECURITY CHECKPOINT EXPANSION – The TSA checkpoint expansion will expand the existing three lanes security lanes to six lanes. Work began on October 10, 2022. Collins Construction is the general contractor. Current work includes utilities installation and enclosing the second floor. Project scheduled to be completed in fall of 2024.
- SAC 30616 – DEMO AIR CARGO, CONSTRUCT APRON, TAXILANE– Project to redevelop the southeast quadrant of the airport. Phase 1 is complete. Phase 1a begins in April 2023 which is construction of Taxi lane GA7 is 90 percent complete. Project to be completed by early winter of 2023.

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

Ms. Mary Moskowitz, Chief Planning Officer with CAT, presented the CAT report.

- Intelligent Transportation System (ITS)-Clever Devices (5339/Z230/M301)
  - Status remains on hold. One vessel (Florence Martus) remains without installation of Clever devices ITS System.
  - Project Status: Hold
- Ferry Boat Maintenance Facility & Ferry Dock (5307h)
  - The Maintenance Facility is in final engineering. The RFP for the Ferry Dock will close on December 12, 2023. Award is expected to be issued in January 2024.
  - Project Status: Ongoing
- Ferry Boat Maintenance Facility & Ferry Dock (5307h) (Ferry Vessel Rehab)
  - Working on scheduled rehab while maintaining needed level of service for ferry operations.
  - Project Status: Ongoing
- Savannah Belles Hybrid Electric Ferry Replacement
  - On 11/15 received correspondence that the application will be processed by FTA. The deadline to submit the application is January 15, 2024.
  - Project Status: Ongoing
- Electric Bus Replacement (Z230) and (5339c)
  - Grants for four EV buses. Tentatively scheduled for January CAT Board approval.
  - Project Status: Ongoing
- Installation of Charging Stations (Georgia Power)
  - Installation of charging stations at CAT Central expected completion is January 2024
  - Project Status: Ongoing
- American Rescue Plan (ARP) Route Restoration Analysis
  - Expected completion end of FY 2024. The project will allow CAT to provide accessibility to under-served communities with service across jurisdictions.
  - Performed in conjunction with other planning and analysis efforts. Project Status: Obligated (Funds Awarded in 5/2022 with 100% Federal match)

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

Report attached to the agenda.

### [18. TIP Funding Tracking Report](#)

Ms. Wang stated there aren't that many updates since the last meeting. Ms. Sally Helm has been contacting the project sponsors and they indicated there was not much progress made, therefore we attached the original October meeting report.

## **VII. Other Public Comments (limit to 3 minutes)**

## **VIII. Notices**

### [19. GTIB 2024 Call for Projects](#)

Ms. Wang stated whenever we receive notice for a grant that is available, we include the notice on the agenda. All of these grants are applicable for local jurisdictions. If anyone wants to apply for funding, please take a look at the information.

### [20. Advanced Transportation Technology and Innovation \(ATTAIN\) Program Funds](#)

### [21. Next CORE MPO Board Meeting February 28, 2024, at 10:00am](#)

## **IX. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the December 13th, 2023 CORE MPO 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.