



Chickamauga and Chattanooga National Military Park Traffic Impact Study and Subarea Transportation Plan



**CCNMP Stakeholder Participation Panel
September 29, 2003 – 1:30pm
City of Fort Oglethorpe Offices
Meeting Notes**

Attendees

Tom Ingledew, CBC
Olney Meadows, Catoosa County
Charles Crawford, GA Battlefields Association
Teresa Wallace, Georgia Visitor Center – Ringgold
Kathy Johnson, Northwest Georgia Joint Development Authority
Bebe Heiskell, Walker County Commissioner
Dan Latham, Coosa Valley Regional Development Council
Kathryn Sellers, Georgia Civil War Heritage Trails
Melydia Clewell, Catoosa County Chamber of Commerce
John Culpepper, City of Chickamauga
David Ashbane, Walker County
Paul Page, City of Fort Oglethorpe
Sue Bales, City of Fort Oglethorpe
Jeff Long, City of Fort Oglethorpe
Debi Wilson, Fort Oglethorpe Downtown Development Authority
Karen Goodlet Fort Oglethorpe Downtown Development Authority
Ronnie Moore, Chattanooga Times- Free Press
Patrick Reed, National Park Service – CCNMP
Jim Szykowski, National Park Service – CCNMP
Nola Chavez, National Park Service
Nastaran Saadatmand, Federal Highway Administration – Eastern Federal Lands Division
Karen Rhodes, Chattanooga-Hamilton Regional Planning
David Howerin, Coosa Valley Regional Development Council
Annette Eason, Georgia Department of Transportation
Ulysses Mitchell, Georgia Department of Transportation
Cindy VanDyke, Georgia Department of Transportation
Nick Moscovoy, Georgia Department of Transportation
Dan Krechmer, Cambridge Systematics
Rob Schiffer, Cambridge Systematics
Keli Paul, Cambridge Systematics
Krista Schneider, John Milner Associates
Rod Wilburn, Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.
Marta Rosen, Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.
Kristen Wescott, Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.
Mary Shavalier, Day Wilburn Associates, Inc.

Welcome/Introductions

Pat Reed, CCNMP Superintendent, welcomed SPP members to the second meeting of the SPP. He indicated that he is looking forward to hearing from the various representatives about key issues and suggestions on how the issues should be addressed.

Annette Eason (GDOT) also welcomed the group. She mentioned that the project team has compiled a lot of information on transportation and resource issues that they want to share with



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the group today. In addition, the breakout sessions will provide members with an opportunity to provide input and participate in discussions on key study issues.

Rod Wilburn (DWA) provided an overview of the today's workshop agenda. The first part of the workshop involves presentations of key study findings to date: the transportation analysis and cultural and natural resource evaluation. Following the presentations, the group will divide up into two breakout groups, with the first group addressing issues relating to Park and the second group addressing issues relating to the surrounding community. A second round of breakout groups will then be held, with each group addressing issues in the other area. Following the two sessions, there will be a reporting back of the groups' discussions to the large group.

Study Overview

Rod briefly outlined the purpose of the study and then summarized the input obtained from the July 14 SPP meeting. Study issues address four main areas:

- Transportation and Mobility
- Resource Preservation
- Economic Development
- Recreation

SPP member suggestions on key issues in each of these areas were presented. The overall goals, objectives, and performance measures that have been established to guide the Subarea Transportation Plan and Traffic Impact Study were also presented. This information was included in the Power point presentation.

Study Progress to Date

Mary Shavaliere (DWA) overviewed the study team's efforts on the project. The initial phase of the project is focusing on collecting and analyzing information on the transportation system, the cultural and natural resources, as well as relevant plans and policy documents. Team members gave presentations on some key study findings:

Questionnaire

Mary reported on the results of the questionnaire which was developed to obtain input on travel patterns, usage of the Park, problem areas and improvement suggestions for both the Park and the surrounding community. The questionnaire was distributed to the public at the July 14 public meeting and to SPP members. In addition, it was circulated to a large number of groups as part of the environmental justice outreach effort. The questionnaire was also posted on the GDOT project website.

Fifty completed questionnaires were returned, with 10 from the environmental justice outreach, 10 from SPP members, and 30 from the general public. A summary of the responses to key questions was presented, and is included in the Power point presentation.

Traffic and Travel Patterns

Keli Paul (CSI) gave an overview of the methodology used to analyze traffic and travel patterns in both the Park and broader community. Existing traffic counts were supplemented with new traffic counts, a license tag survey, and a roadside interview survey. The purpose of each



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method was described. Traffic counts were evaluated to better understand the travel patterns within the study area before and after the relocation of US 27. The license tag survey, conducted in May 2003, will be used for the distribution of trips going to and from each tag site. The roadside interview survey, conducted in July 2003, was a big success with a response rate of approximately 69%. Based on the results of the roadside interview, 83% of the traffic traveling through the LaFayette Road intersection with McFarland Gap Road/Reed's Bridge Road was classified as a Non-Park trip, with 17% having a Park destination or origin. Additional key findings regarding the traffic volumes and travel patterns on community and Park roadways were also presented.

The travel information will be used to update the Chattanooga Hamilton County MPO's travel demand model and travel projections prepared for future conditions.

Cultural and Natural Resources

Krista Schneider (JMA) presented the cultural and natural resources evaluation which is being undertaken. She briefly described the history of the Park and its historic significance.

An overview of historic, cultural and natural resources issues related to circulation in the Park was presented. Some of the important considerations that need to be addressed include the visual resources and character, interpretive signs and stations, interpretive tour route, commemorative features.

Krista provided examples of criteria that will be used to assess the resource sensitivity issues associated with the various transportation options. The criteria include the interpretive value/potential, historic integrity, contribution to positive visitor experience, and association with historic period.

Transportation Implications

Dan Krechmer (CSI) presented an overview of how the transportation system performance measures can be used to assess roads with unique recreational and/or scenic qualities. He discussed Standard traffic analysis techniques, including the concept of Level of Service analysis, which grades roadway or intersection performance on a scale from A (free flowing) to F (gridlocked). These criteria are documented primarily in the Highway Capacity Manual (HCM), and put a premium on throughput and efficiency. The highest speed that can be safely achieved is generally considered the most desirable condition. The HCM has recognized the need for different methodologies to address performance criteria for scenic and recreational roads. These criteria are based on the recognition that reductions in volume and slower speeds may be necessary to enable users to benefit from the scenic and recreational opportunities provided, as well as to provide for safer operation. Conflicts between those using the road for recreation and those wishing to use it as a through route will lead to safety concerns. The NPS is currently developing level of service criteria for its roadways but this work will not be completed in time for this project. Dan presented several methods of measuring level of service including HCM criteria for Class II scenic roads and special criteria developed for Parkways in the Colonial National Historic Park. In addition to modifying the level of service criteria, one may choose instead to simply accept a lower level of service. The importance of agreement on these criteria was emphasized, as we move into the alternatives development and evaluation stage.



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Dan also discussed other actions that can be taken to enhance the enjoyment of scenic and recreational roads. These include addition of turnouts, development of non-motorized paths along historic rights-of-way paralleling the road, one-way traffic patterns with parking on one side and shuttle or public transportation options. Some examples from other Parks were presented.

Break out Discussion Groups

The group divided into two groups, and then met to discuss issues related to the Subarea Transportation Plan and Traffic Impact Study. After the sessions, the larger group reconvened, with the facilitator from each group presenting a summary of the group discussions. Attachment 1 presents the notes from each group.

Closing Remarks

The second project newsletter will be distributed in the near future, with information on the deficiencies and needs identified during the first phase of the study. The next round of public and SPP meetings is scheduled for early December. The meetings will focus on reviewing potential alternatives to address the issues and needs.

SPP Members were reminded to visit the GDOT project website to view periodic study updates.

Rod Wilburn thanked members for their attendance at today's workshop. A lot of good feedback was obtained, which will be useful in developing a comprehensive evaluation of existing conditions. Annette Eason (GDOT) and Ulysses Mitchell (GDOT) both expressed appreciation for everyone's attendance and participation. The input will help ensure that the recommendations that are developed will address local needs.



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Attachment 1

Issues, Outcomes and Evaluation Measures identified by Discussion Groups September 29, 2003 Stakeholder Participation Panel Workshop

Subarea Transportation Plan Discussion Group

Problem/Issue Statement #1

Want visitors to have positive experience and time to enjoy Park
Too much traffic and noise

Desired outcomes

Positive experience for visitor – safer, slower, quieter
Recreation in addition to commemorative and historical
Expand opportunities including outside park
Preservation of space

Measures

Slow speed
Traffic mix – larger percentage of Park visitors
Lower total volume
Accident rate
Complaints

Problem/Issue Statement #2

Fundamental conflict between Park visitors and through traffic

Desired outcome(s)

Reduce traffic to those either visiting or driving through to enjoy park

Measures

Reduction in through traffic in Park, specifically on LaFayette Road.

Problem/Issue Statement #3

People are still using Lafayette Road for through trips

Desired outcome(s)

Minimize through traffic

Measures

Directness of traffic volume route scenic
Travel times same



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Traffic Impact Study Discussion Group

Problem/Issue Statement #1

Difficult to access Fort Oglethorpe from US 27 relocation

Desired outcome(s)

Increase business in downtown Ft. Oglethorpe
Reduce traffic in park
Connect park, Ft. Oglethorpe and downtown

Measures

None identified

Problem/Issue Statement #2

Decreased travel through downtown Fort Oglethorpe due to relocation of US27 (economic development)

Desired outcome(s)

Increase travel through downtown Ft. Oglethorpe (increased economic vitality)
Extend beautification north of SR2 I/S to provide gateway
Have traffic go through downtown and then divert to US72 via McFarland Gap Road
Business patronage

Measures

Tax revenue
Vacancies
Unemployment

Problem/Issue Statement #3

How to increase use of businesses in business district

Desired outcome(s)

Better understanding or greater recognition of historic district

Measures

Improved signage/interpretation

Problem/Issue Statement #4

Provide eastern bypass/improve existing north-south roads and connections

Desired outcome(s)

Improve n-s movement east of park

Measures

None identified



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Problem/Issue Statement #5

Growth patterns

Desired outcome(s)

Help revitalize historic and business districts
Beautification/gateway

Measures

Utilize other sources (reg. wastewater study) – 5, 10, 20 yr projections for Catoosa, Dade, and Walker Counties (Arcadis)

Problem/Issue Statement #6

Safe access to US27 bypass between City of Chickamauga and McFarland Gap (Osburn, Wilder)

Desired outcome(s)

Greater use of bypass

Measures

Traffic counts

Problem/Issue Statement #7

Not getting enough attention on North Georgia road needs

Desired outcome(s)

Greater representation on MPO/Committees

Measures

of members
% of members
Allocation or revenue

Problem/Issue Statement #8

Access/safety at US27/McFarland Gap intersection

Desired outcome(s)

Fewer accidents
Quicker speeds

Measures

Accident rates
Travel speeds



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Problem/Issue Statement #9

Access/safety connection to bypass @ McFarland Gap

Desired outcome(s)

Signal or 2nd ramp connection between 2 roadways

Measures

Accident data
Signal warrant study
Detailed traffic counts

Problem/Issue Statement #10

Economic impacts of bypass on Fort Oglethorpe business district. Most are locally owned businesses.

Desired outcome(s)

More pleasant environment through business district
Traffic through Fort Oglethorpe but not through Park

Measures

Trips through Park
18,000 + trips through business district
Better signage/landscaping
* Application for enhancement grant

Problem/Issue Statement #11

Business wanted in City of Chickamauga, which was significant in battle

Desired outcome(s)

"Gettysburg" of the South
Visitors attracted to town
RR track connection Chickamauga – Park
Dual mode vehicle non motorized path tie in Chattanooga
Reduced auto traffic
Regional auto tour with audio

Measures

None identified



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Problem/Issue Statement #12

Potential positive economic impacts of bypass (on US27 in Chickamauga)

Desired outcome(s)

Positive economic impacts without negative impacts (balance between Ft. Oglethorpe and Chickamauga; local vs. corporate)

Measures

Taxable property value

New jobs