Title VI and Equity Analysis
CAT Ferry Maintenance Facility and Ferry Dock
# Table of Contents

Background and Project Description .........................................................3  
Ferry Maintenance Facility........................................................................5  
Ferry Dock...............................................................................................5  

Study Purpose..........................................................................................6  

Title VI Compliance..................................................................................6  

Ferry Maintenance Facility........................................................................7  
  Site Identification Process  
  Benefits and Burdens Analysis  
  Site Location Maps  
  Alternative Equity Analysis  
  Cumulative Impacts Analysis  
  Community Outreach  

Ferry Dock...............................................................................................11  
  Site Selection and Assessment Process  
  Site Identification Process  
  Benefits and Burdens Analysis  
  Site Location Maps  
  Alternative Equity Analysis  
  Cumulative Impacts Analysis  
  Community Outreach  

Conclusions............................................................................................16  

Resources...............................................................................................16
Background and Project Description

Chatham Area Transit (CAT) provides public transportation service to the Savannah, Georgia urbanized area, which encompasses over 265,000 people in 438 square miles. As part of their system, CAT offers a fare-free water ferry service that connects the Trade Center on Hutchinson Island with Historic River Street. In addition to the ferry, CAT operates fixed-route bus service, complementary paratransit services, and county-wide ADA paratransit service (contracted from Chatham County) reaching major tourist destinations, employers, universities, and hospitals in the Savannah area.

The ferry system, known locally as the “Savannah Belles Ferry,” has three stops and connects the Savannah International Trade & Convention Center on Hutchinson Island, the Savannah City Hall in the heart of historic River Street, and the Waving Girl landing on the eastern end of River Street. The ferry service operates seven days a week from 7:00 a.m. until midnight, with 20-minute peak and 30-minute off-peak frequencies between stops. The ferry provides service to more than 750,000 passengers annually. In an effort to attract more passengers and simultaneously enhance its ferry service, a new ferry maintenance facility and ferry dock are being proposed for the Savannah Belles Ferry system. The proposed sites for these projects are shown in Figure 1. This ferry maintenance facility will be located on Hutchinson Island to create space for CAT to perform more complex preventative maintenance tasks and provide high-quality service to the community. The new ferry dock will be located on the west end of historic River Street to expand access to Downtown Savannah.
Figure 1: Proposed Sites for the Ferry Maintenance Facility and Ferry Dock
Currently, the maintenance facility for the ferry service is eight parking spaces in the Savannah International Trade and Convention Center’s underground parking garage. The existing garage offers inadequate space to perform even the most routine maintenance tasks and safety inspections.

Equipment for the new facility will include a parts cleaner, air compressor, grinding and cutting wheels, and welding equipment, allowing CAT staff to improve the condition of the Authority’s ferry fleet in a more safe and timely manner. A new maintenance facility will limit CAT’s dependence on this outsourced ferry maintenance work, thus improving downtime and system reliability. CAT also anticipates a significant savings on routine operational and preventative maintenance costs by performing more in-house work with CAT’s staff. Those additional resources can be re-purposed toward more service and better passenger amenities, ultimately enhancing the quality of the ferry system.

Savannah continues to grow as a tourist destination. In 2016, downtown Savannah attracted more than 13.4 million visitors. Because of this growth and lack of parking downtown, a mobility study entitled “Parking Matters” was developed to address these topics. This study recommended downtown shuttle service. With this new recommendation, CAT seeks to improve mobility and access for workers and visitors of downtown through a new ferry dock adjacent to new developments on River Street.

The new River Street developments will consist of a $270 million mixed-use development known as “Plant Riverside” and a $72 million boutique hotel. The hotel, which will be located on the west end of River Street, will have more than 600 guest rooms and suites, a large meeting space, more than a dozen shops and restaurants, and a live music and entertainment venue. Combined, the two massive developments are expected to create more than 800 new jobs through construction. Unfortunately, CAT does not offer ferry service to this area.

The construction of a new ferry dock on the west end of River Street will allow CAT to meet the growing demand for ferry service. Due to increased activity at the Trade Center on Hutchinson Island, which regularly hosts conventions with thousands of attendees, the demand for ferry service has grown. In Fiscal Year 2009, the ferry system provided 452,000 passengers trips. That figure has grown to 745,000 passengers trips in Fiscal Year 2016, a 65% increase. With the system already nearing maximum capacity and with the anticipated new developments on the west end of downtown, a dire need exists to expand this popular service.
Study Purpose

The purpose of the Title VI Equity Analysis is to determine whether the sites selected for the ferry maintenance facility and ferry dock will disproportionately impact or burden people on the basis of race, color, or national origin. The site selected for the ferry maintenance facility is a singular parcel located on Hutchinson Island, that is currently owned by CAT. The dock will be located on the Savannah River connected to a concrete platform on a building that is part of a new mixed-used development.

Title VI Compliance

CAT is committed to complying with Title VI. CAT’s policy statement is as follows:

Chatham Area Transit Authority (CAT) is committed to ensuring that no person is excluded from participation in, or denied the benefits of its transit services on the basis of race, color or national origin, as protected by Title VI in Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Circular 4702.1.B. This plan was developed to guide Chatham Area Transit Authority in its administration and management of Title VI-related activities. The current Title VI Plan is here:


According to FTA Circular 4702.1B regarding the determination of site or location of facilities: Title 49 CFR Section 21.9(b)(3) states, “In determining the site or location of facilities, a recipient or applicant may not make selections with the purpose or effect of excluding persons from, denying them the benefits of, or subjecting them to discrimination under any program to which this regulation applies, on the grounds of race, color, or national origin; or with the purpose or effect of defeating or substantially impairing the accomplishment of the objectives of the Act or this part.” Title 49 CFR part 21, Appendix C, Section (3)(iv) provides, “The location of projects requiring land acquisition and the displacement of persons from their residences and businesses may not be determined on the basis of race, color, or national origin.”

Requirements of the Title VI and Equity Analysis include:

1. Outreach to persons potentially impacted by the siting of facilities;
2. Analysis taking place before site selection;
3. Comparison of facilities with similar impacts to determine any cumulative adverse impacts; and
4. Consideration and analysis of site alternatives for disparate impacts.

In the event of finding disparate impacts, the alternative with the least impacts should be considered.
Ferry Maintenance Facility

Site Selection and Assessment Process

The current parking garage space used by maintenance staff for ferry maintenance was dedicated to CAT in 2003. The space is inadequate for routine maintenance and safety inspections, presenting safety and security risks for the ferry fleet as well as maintenance staff. In addition, the current space is located more than a quarter mile from the ferry tie-up location. These challenges provided the following criteria for the future ferry maintenance site:

- Adequate space for an independent facility free from other land uses;
- Adequate space for routine ferry maintenance and safety tasks; and
- Adequate distance (less than one-fourth mile) from ferry-tie up location.

Site Identification Process

The selected site, shown in Figure 2, meets all criteria for a ferry maintenance facility. The site consists of two parcels, 7C and 7D, both subsections of Parcel 7 Hutchison Island PRB. The 3.19 acre site has plenty of space to support the proposed 3,000 square-foot ferry maintenance facility, which CAT believes will be an adequate space to perform the needed routine ferry maintenance and safety inspections. The site also sits 500 feet the ferry tie-up location (less than the required 1,320 feet).

Benefits and Burdens Analysis

The selected site was evaluated to determine the benefits and burdens of an impact of a maintenance facility. The site is cleared, not requiring displacements of buildings. Table 1 (see below) presents the benefits and burdens of the site.

Table 1: Benefits and Burdens of Potential Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Benefits/Positive Impacts</th>
<th>Burdens/Adverse Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Site 1: International Drive | • Both parcels  
  • Zoned for PD – Planned Development, allows for a wide variety of land uses  
  • Currently owned by Chatham Area Transit Authority  
  • Parcel 7C currently cleared and rough graded | • Both Parcels  
  • Inside the 100-year Flood Zone  
  • Future land use is downtown expansion, does not allow for industrial use  
  • Parcel 7D contains freshwater emergent wetland |
Figure 2: Location of Potential Site for Proposed Ferry Maintenance Facility (International Drive)
Figure 3: Census Block Group with Potential Site for Proposed Ferry Maintenance Facility
Alternatives Equity Analysis

An equity analysis was conducted to compare the potential site location to the city and the county for various demographic factors to determine if the facility will impact minorities, low-income populations, and limited-English proficiency (LEP) populations. Statistics for demographic factors higher than the county are potential equity concerns. These statistics are shown in Table 3. (see below)

### Table 3: Demographic Factors for the Site, City, and County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Site 1 Census Tract 106.05, Block Group 1</th>
<th>Savannah</th>
<th>Chatham County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>145,403</td>
<td>288,496</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Population</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>93,887</td>
<td>148,580</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Minority Population</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>51,516</td>
<td>139,916</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Below Poverty</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>29,445</td>
<td>41,529</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$0</td>
<td>$43,307</td>
<td>$56,842</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited English Proficient Populations</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3,998</td>
<td>8,649</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: United States Census Bureau 2015-2019 5-year American Community Survey Data

Block Group 1 for Census Tract 106.05 contains half of Hutchinson Island. Although the block group includes homes and townhomes, 2015-2019 5-year American Community survey (ACS) data does not furnish any counts for population in the block group. A search on Zillow reveals that properties in the area have been sold since 2019, likely before the ACS data was completed and released. Public involvement for the project is in progress and could indicate whether the population living on Hutchinson Island is minority, low-income, or LEP populations. While Savannah and Chatham County have minority, low-income, and LEP populations, the data for the subject block group does not include any population. The analysis determines that no populations, whether protected by Title VI or not, will be impacted by the facility on the site.

Cumulative Impacts Analysis

Cumulative Impacts for the potential site include land use surrounding the site. Parcels around the site are listed under Planned Development, which encourages a mix of land uses in the same development including residential and non-residential. One parcel supports two structures for the Hutchinson Island Terminal Barge/Tug Company. Others include open, undeveloped land used for unofficial parking. Because of the land uses adjacent to the site, the addition of the facility to the selected site will not cause significant cumulative impacts.

Community Outreach

Community outreach for the project is in progress.
Ferry Dock

Site Selection and Assessment Process

CAT’s ferry service has three stops as seen in Figure 4: Trade Center Landing, City Hall Landing, and Waving Girl Landing. Because of increased activity at the Savannah International Trade and Convention Center and the growth over the years in ferry ridership, CAT is seeking to expand its ferry service. To expand service, a new ferry stop must be developed.

The ideal site would have the following factors:

- Easy access to the Savannah River; and
- Serve a new part of downtown Savannah.

Site Identification Process

The selected site for the new ferry dock is located along River Street and meets the criteria for a new ferry stop. The dock would be part of a new development with direct access to the Savannah River. The site is also located on the west end of historic River Street, which will help address a capacity constraint in a rapidly growing part of town that is not served by ferry service.

Benefits and Burdens Analysis

The selected site was evaluated to determine the benefits and burdens of an impact of a maintenance facility. The site is currently under construction for a new development. Table 4 (see below) presents the benefits and burdens of the site.

Table 4: Benefits and Burdens of Potential Site

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Site</th>
<th>Benefits/Positive Impacts</th>
<th>Burdens/Adverse Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Site 1: 500 W River St</td>
<td>• Zoned for D-W – Downtown Waterfront, allows for marine-oriented businesses</td>
<td>• Inside the 100-year Flood Zone</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Future land use is Downtown</td>
<td>• Not owned by Chatham Area Transit Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Contains no wetlands</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 4: CAT’s Current and Proposed Ferry Service
Figure 5: Location of Potential Site for Proposed Ferry Dock (500 W River Street)
AECOM
Figure 6: Census Block Group with Potential Site for Proposed Ferry Dock
Alternatives Equity Analysis

An equity analysis was conducted to compare the potential site to the city and the county for various demographic factors to determine if the dock will impact minorities, low-income populations, and limited-English proficiency populations. Statistics for demographic factors higher than the county are potential equity concerns. These statistics are shown in Table 5. (see below)

Table 5: Demographic Factors for the Site, City, and County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Site 1 Census Tract 1, Block Group 1</th>
<th>Savannah</th>
<th>Chatham County</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Population</td>
<td>1,600</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>145,403</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minority Population</td>
<td>1,218</td>
<td>76.1%</td>
<td>93,887</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Minority Population</td>
<td>3820</td>
<td>23.9%</td>
<td>51,516</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Below Poverty</td>
<td>744</td>
<td>80.2%</td>
<td>29,445</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Median Household Income</td>
<td>$12,048</td>
<td></td>
<td>$43,307</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limited English Proficient Populations</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>6.3%</td>
<td>3,998</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: United States Census Bureau 2015-2019 5-year American Community Survey Data

Census Tract 1, Block Group 1 encompasses part of Downtown Savannah and the Port of Savannah-Ocean Terminal. This portion of downtown has residential uses such as a student dormitory, hotels, and Yamacraw Village, a low-income housing development built in 1940. Data shows that this block group has a higher minority population, low-income population, and LEP population than both the City of Savannah and Chatham County. Table 4 shows that the minority population of the block group (76.1%) is more than Savannah (64.6%) and Chatham County (51.5%). Also, the low-income population is the highest for the block group (80.2%) that the other two geographies (21.9% for Savannah) and (15.1% for Chatham County). The block group also has the lowest median household income ($12,048), between the block group, Savannah ($43,307), and Chatham County (($56,842). The LEP population for the block group is higher than that of both Savannah (2.9%) and Chatham County (3.2%). The analysis determines that significant minority, low-income, and LEP populations are present in the block group with the proposed ferry dock location.

Cumulative Impacts Analysis

Parcels around the site are listed under Downtown Waterfront and Downtown Central Business District. The proposed ferry dock will be located between two proposed hotels. Because of the land uses adjacent to the site, the addition of the facility to the selected site will not cause significant cumulative impacts.

Community Outreach

Community outreach for the project is in progress.
Conclusions

Preliminary research suggests that the ferry maintenance facility will not have any impact on Title VI-protected populations. Although significant Title VI protected-populations are in the block group of the proposed ferry dock, the addition of the ferry dock will increase mobility and access for those populations with the fare-free ferry service. In addition to more ferry service, there will be an extension in shuttle service and more ADA-accessible amenities located close to the ferry dock.

These conclusions will be updated when the community outreach period has closed.

Resources


