



Savannah Mobility Management, Inc.

Savannah's Fare-Free downtown transportation System



2013 & 2014 Biannual Report

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Executive Summary

Savannah Mobility Management, Inc. (SaMMI) is a unique partnership, formed from a host of different agencies, stakeholder groups, asset owners and supporters to provide, together with other mobility priorities, a single, integrated, downtown transportation system which is free to visitors and residents alike. By any measure this partnership has seen success, reflected in user acceptance, ridership growth, ongoing industry recognition and continuing stakeholder support.

SaMMI's purpose is to oversee and implement the Savannah Visitor Mobility Plan; and to administer related funding, specifically for the implementation of a system to improve transportation in the downtown district of the City of Savannah. It operates as a Business League under Section 501(c)(6) of the Internal Revenue Code and as an independent, volunteer organization, by and under terms of the Mobility Funding Implementation and Oversight Contract with the City of Savannah. Core funding is provided by a Per Occupied Room fee.

The following report covers the calendar years 2013 and 2014.

About SaMMI

What is SaMMI's mission?

SaMMI was founded to implement the city of Savannah's Visitor Mobility Plan. This plan was established in 2005 to address the growing transportation needs of tourists and residents in the downtown area. The plan calls for the following elements:

- Fast, easy, useful, FREE downtown transportation for visitors and residents.
- Using existing assets and resources.
- Expansion and improvements to the water ferry frequency, coverage, and hours
- Expansion of the CAT downtown shuttle
- Launching River Street Streetcar service
- Providing comfortable shelters
- An automated passenger information system
- A "Walk Savannah" program to encourage pedestrian activity
- One stop transportation management for visitors, group leaders, and meeting planners
- Exporting a fair share of costs to visitors

Many of these elements have been accomplished. SaMMI leverages its funding to cover the operational and capital costs of the transportation services described in the Visitor Mobility Plan.

What does SaMMI spend its funding on?

SaMMI is required to spend its funding to implement the city's Visitor Mobility Plan (2005). SaMMI has defined six Program Elements in its budget: Water Ferry, Streetcar, Express Shuttle, Convention Transportation Fund, Wayfinding, and Frontline Training. SaMMI allocates funds to support the operation of transit services and matching funds to support capital improvements. SaMMI is currently accruing funds for the construction of the City Hall Landing Shelter and for fleet replacement for the Express Shuttle. SaMMI also supports the capital costs for Wayfinding signage.

How does SaMMI provide free transit services?

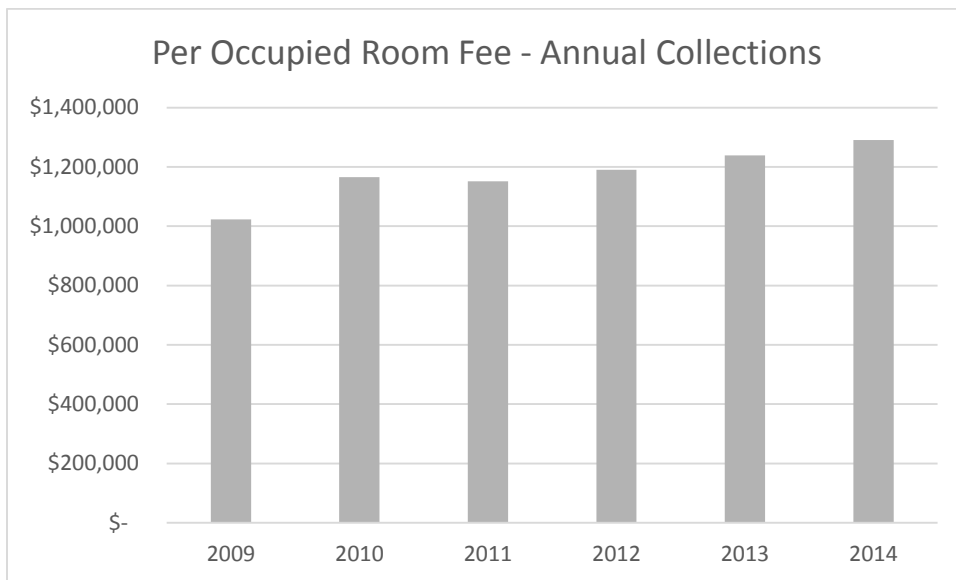
The City of Savannah authorized SaMMI to administer revenue collected from the Per Occupied Room (POR) fee to implement the Visitor Mobility Plan. The POR fee is assessed to hotels with 25 or more rooms operating within the city's "Convention District" at \$1 per occupied room per night (\$1.75 for properties on Hutchinson Island). This funding mechanism ensures that visitors pay a share of the costs for downtown transportation services.

SaMMI could not implement the Visitor Mobility Plan without substantial support from institutional partners. Here are some examples of how SaMMI leveraged its funding in 2014.

- Express Shuttle - For every \$1 that SaMMI spent to operate the Express Shuttle, the City and Chatham Area Transit matched with \$1.36 in combined funding and in-kind services.
- River Street Streetcar - For every \$1 that SaMMI spent on streetcar operations, the City provided \$3.88.
- Savannah Belles Ferry - While SaMMI provided 40% of its gross revenue for water ferry operations, the GIMTC bears all remaining operational costs for the service.
- Wayfinding – the City and SaMMI agreed to evenly split the cost of fabricating new signage.

Per Occupied Room (POR) Fee Performance

- The POR fee is collected from all *Convention District* accommodations having 25 rooms or more. The fee is currently \$1.00 per occupied room per night for all such accommodations, except those located on Hutchinson Island where the fee is \$1.75 per occupied room per night.
- POR fee collections for 2013 totaled \$1,238,687; a 4.1% increase from 2012.
- During 2013, there were 29 properties collecting the POR fee, representing a total of approximately 4,143 rooms.
- POR fee collections for 2014 totaled \$1,290,282; a 4.2% increase from 2013.
- During 2014, there were 31 properties collecting the POR fee, representing a total of approximately 4,349 rooms. A list of these properties is provided below.



Convention District Accommodations with 25 rooms or more as of December, 2014

Andaz Savannah	Embassy Suites	Marshall House
Best Western	Four Points by Sheraton	Planter's Inn
Bluegreen Studio Homes	Hampton Inn	Quality Inn
Bohemian Hotel	Hampton Inn and Suites	Residence Inn
Comfort Suites	Hilton Garden Inn	River Street Inn
Cotton Sail	Holiday Inn Express	Springhill Suites
Country Inn & Suites	Hyatt Regency Savannah	Staybridge Suites
Courtyard by Marriott	Inn at Ellis Square	The Brice
DeSoto Hilton Savannah	Mansion on Forsyth Park	Thunderbird Inn
Doubletree Historic Savannah	Marriott Savannah Riverfront	Westin Savannah Harbor
East Bay Inn		

dot Transportation System

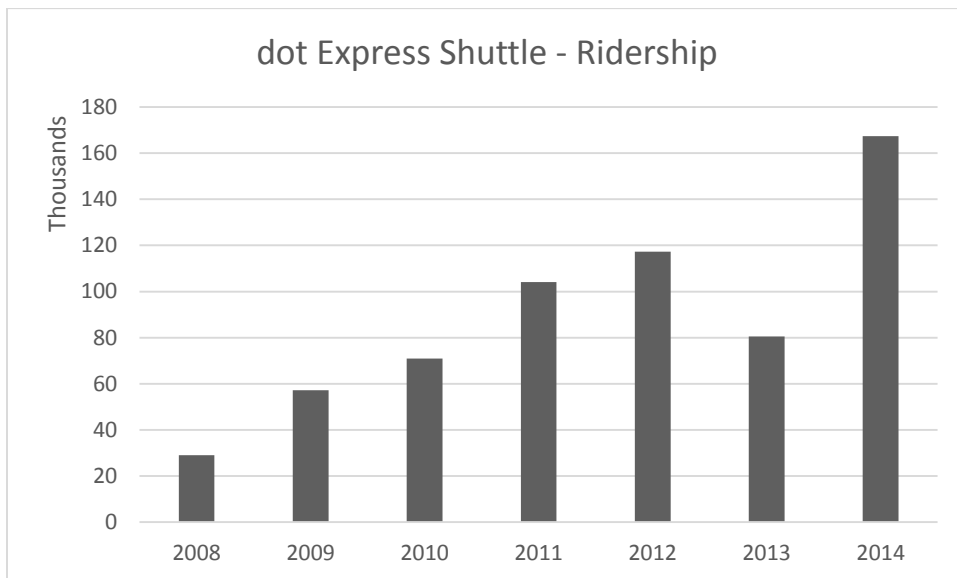
Overview

- dot Transportation services experienced growth and set ridership records in 2013 and 2014.
- Express Shuttle set an annual record for ridership in 2014. The Express Shuttle provided over 167,000 fare free trips. This is nearly 50,000 more trips than the previous record set in 2012.
- Savannah Belles Ferry set annual ridership records in both 2013 & 2014. Ferry ridership has increased every year since 2010.
- The River Street Streetcar achieved a record number of average passengers per day in 2014. The streetcar was in operation for 21 days in 2013 and 76 days in 2014.

	Total Ridership		Average Passenger Trips per Day	
	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>	<i>2013</i>	<i>2014</i>
Express Shuttle	80,503	167,364	223	464
Savannah Belles Water Ferry	709,965	763,705	1,961	2,110
River Street Streetcar	5,797	34,342	276	452

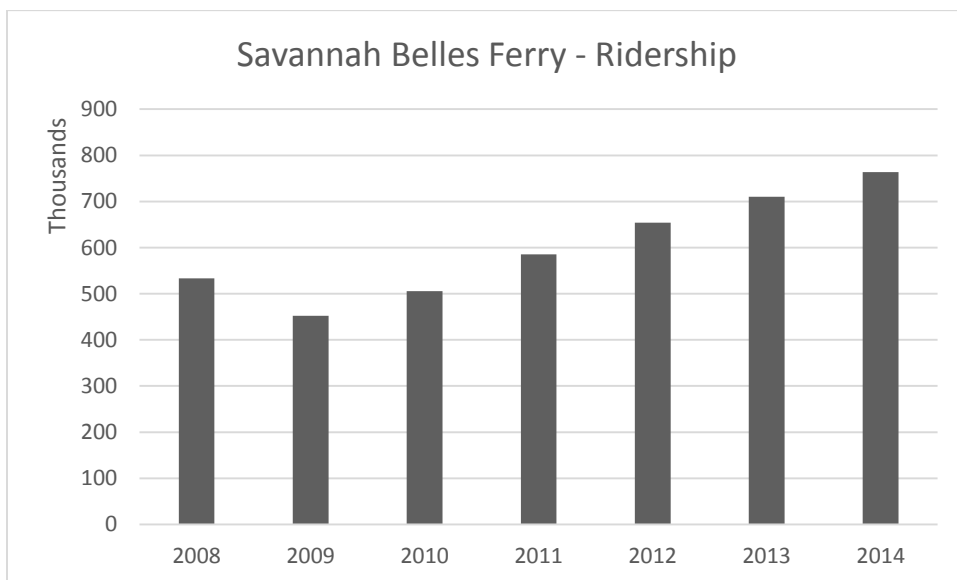
Express Shuttle

- The Express Shuttle operates two buses daily, providing 20-25 minute frequency to each of 12 stops. The Express Shuttle operates from 7am to 9pm Monday through Saturday and 11am to 9pm on Sunday. The service began operation in March, 2008.
- SaMMI implemented a service change to the Express Shuttle service during 2013 in coordination with the city of Savannah and Chatham Area Transit. In October, 2013, the shuttle's route was changed to include the Joe Murray Rivers Jr. Intermodal Transit Center. Simultaneously, Chatham Area Transit ended its CAT Shuttle service which covered a similar region as the dot Express Shuttle.
- In the summer of 2014 the Express Shuttle vehicles got a fresh, new look. A full vehicle wrap was applied to two 30' transit buses dedicated by CAT to serve the Shuttle route.
- 2013 Overview
 - \$230,796 of POR fee funds supported the Express Shuttle; 18.6% of POR fee collections.
 - Ridership was 80,503, a decrease of 31% from 2012.
- 2014 Overview
 - \$237,798 of POR fee funds supported the Express Shuttle; 18.4% of POR fee collections.
 - Ridership was 167,364, up 108% from 2013.



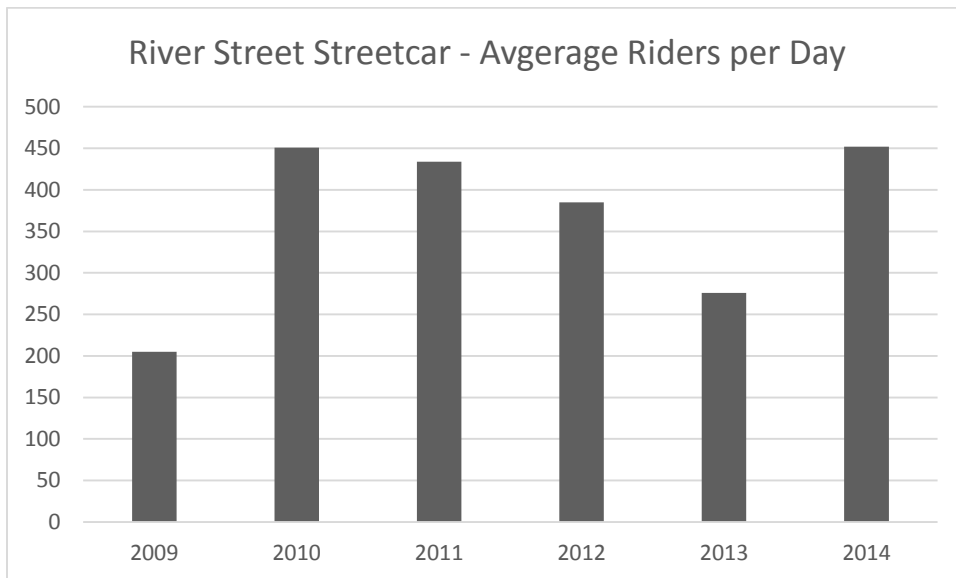
Savannah Belles Ferry

- The Savannah Belles Ferry service provides a vital link between Historic Savannah and Hutchinson Island, home to the Savannah International Trade & Convention Center, golf and resort facilities. Daily service is provided from 7am to midnight, seven days per week.
- Four ferries make up the Savannah Belles Fleet; two 86 passenger ferries, the *Juliette Gordon Low* and the *Susie King Taylor*, one 149 passenger ferry, the *Mary Musgrove*, and one 129 passenger ferry, the *Florence Martus*.
- 2013 Overview
 - \$495,475 of POR fee funds supported the Savannah Belles Ferry system; 40% of POR fee collections. In addition, \$100,000 was designated for the future construction of the City Hall Landing shelter.
 - Ridership was 709,965, up 8.5% from 2012.
- 2014 Overview
 - \$516,113 of POR fee funds supported the Savannah Belles Ferry system; 40% of POR fee collections.
 - 2014 ridership was 763,705, up 7.6% from 2013.



River Street Historic Streetcar

- The River Street Historic Streetcar (aka *Dottie*) operates Thursday through Sunday, noon to 9pm.
- *Dottie*, a fully refurbished 1930's-era streetcar, made her debut on River Street on February 11, 2009, joining *dot* sister-services the Express Shuttle and Savannah Belles Ferry.
- *Dottie* holds the distinction of being the first hybrid streetcar in North America. On board generators which power *Dottie's* electric propulsion system are fueled by biodiesel produced with recycled cooking oil collected from local restaurants.
- Due to maintenance and upgrades to components of the undercarriage, including wheels & pulleys, *Dottie* was out of service for much of 2013 and 2014. The streetcar resumed regular operation in June 2014.
- 2013 Overview
 - \$66,638 of POR fee funds supported the River Street Historic Streetcar, 5.4% of POR fee collections.
 - Ridership was 5,797, down 37% from 2012.
 - *Dottie* operated for 21 days in 2014.
- 2014 Overview
 - \$81,427 of POR fee funds supported the River Street Historic Streetcar; 6.3% of POR fee collections.
 - Ridership was 34,342, up 492% from 2013.
 - *Dottie* operated for 76 days in 2014.



Convention Transportation Fund

- The CTF is an element of the Visitor Mobility Plan which is managed by Visit Savannah and designed to provide funding for transportation and transportation related expenses for large, qualifying conventions. Conventions using 600 or more rooms on peak nights in multiple hotels and are meeting in either the Savannah International Trade & Convention Center or Savannah Civic Center, are eligible for consideration.
- Since the inception of the fund in 2004, transportation funding in excess of \$2.1 million has been provided to over 100 groups.
- 2013 Overview
 - \$222,964 of funding was provided to the CTF from the POR fee; 18% of POR fee collections.
 - In 2013 the CTF provided \$258,714 of funding to 12 groups accounting for a total of over 43,000 room nights. At the end of 2013, the CTF fund balance was \$400,109, with future commitments (both definite and tentative) through the year 2018 to 45 groups totaling approximately \$1.6 million.
- 2014 Overview
 - In 2014, \$231,711 of funding was provided to the CTF from the POR fee; 18% of POR fee collections.
 - In 2014 the CTF provided \$295,882 of funding to 16 groups accounting for a total of over 60,000 room nights. Since the inception of the fund in 2004, transportation funding in excess of \$2.1 million has been provided to over 100 groups.
 - At the end of 2014 the CTF fund balance was \$313,201, with future commitments (both definite and tentative) through the year 2020 to 60 groups totaling approximately \$1.5 million.

Wayfinding

- Wayfinding is a comprehensive program for a clear and concise system of signage that presents information with creativity to enhance pedestrian and vehicle circulation throughout downtown. The wayfinding program helps tourists find official visitor's centers, use parking garages and take advantage of the city's pedestrian friendly amenities. All wayfinding elements use a standard palette of colors and typefaces to enhance the city's brand.
- The overall project was divided into planning and implementation phases. The planning phase, consisting of both master plan and design elements, has been completed. SaMMI funded the \$100,000+ cost of this phase of the project which was conducted by Philadelphia based Merje Design.
- The implementation phase, consisting of fabrication and installation, is estimated to cost in excess of \$1.0 million for the entire project. As no single funding source has been identified to implement the total project, implementation will take place incrementally as funding is identified and secured.
- In 2013, SaMMI designated \$10,000 to be applied toward the implementation of wayfinding signage.
- In 2014, SaMMI entered into an agreement with the City of Savannah to install the first phase of wayfinding signage at its dot Express Shuttle stops. The 12 signs were installed in November 2014. An example of the new signage is featured on the cover of this report.

Front Line Training

- The Front Line Training program is part of the Visitor Mobility Plan's effort to ensure that customers and service industry representatives are informed about the mobility system. The program was developed by the Tourism Leadership Council with assistance from Savannah Technical College and commenced in 2008.
- Since its inception, 20 classes have been conducted and over 240 people have completed the training program.

Marketing

- The dot transportation services are promoted by a brochure available at hotels, visitor's centers and other locations throughout Savannah. The brochure includes general information, a schedule, and a detailed map of downtown with routes and stops. Approximately 250,000 brochures were printed and distributed between January 2013 and December 2014.
- ConnectOnTheDot.com continues to be an important promotional outlet for the dot system as well as a source for up to date information on system operating status. The website had 84,151 page views in 2013. Many hospitality partners provide links on their individual websites to the dot website.
- Late in 2014, SaMMI engaged MY Agency to update the ConnectOnTheDot.com website. The new website is optimized for viewing on smartphones and tablets and provides clear, timely, and easy-to-comprehend information about dot services. It is scheduled to launch in early 2015

Governance, Management & Accounting

- SAMMI is governed by an 11 member board which meets quarterly. The board is accountable to the City and other stakeholders for plan implementation, mobility fund administration and policy oversight. The board held four regular meetings in 2013 and four regular meetings in 2014.
- Operational supervision of SaMMI's activities is provided by the Management Committee, which typically meets monthly, or as requested by the chair. The committee convened 11 times in 2013 and 8 times in 2014.
- All funds management, bookkeeping and accounting services are handled by the firm of Canady, Richbourg & Woodward, LLC, Certified Public Accounts.
- The 2013 financial audit was completed by the firm of Caines Hodges & Co., PC, and as with all prior audits, no management letter was issued.

Board of Directors

As of December, 2014 the Savannah Mobility Management, Inc. board of directors were

Marc Friday, chair

General Manager, Planters Inn

Bob Coffey, vice chair

General Manager, Savannah International Trade & Convention Center

Scott Snipes, secretary / treasurer

General Manager, Hyatt Regency Savannah

Jody McIntyre

Director of Sales & Marketing, Marriott Savannah Riverfront

Mark Dana

Vice President, Price Bush Smith Hotels

Chris Crane

General Manager, Embassy Suites Savannah

Charlie Brazil

General Manager, Old Town Trolley Tours

Joe Marinelli

President, Visit Savannah

Patrick Graham

Savannah Chamber of Commerce

Dr. Chadwick Reese

Chief Executive Officer, Chatham Area Transit

Veleeta McDonald

Director of Parking and Mobility Services, City of Savannah

