



900 East Gwinnett Street · Savannah, GA 31401

AGENDA NO: 2026-05-16-016

BOARD MEETING DATE: May 26, 2026

PROJECT NAME: Naming Rights Policy (NEW)

DEPARTMENT: Procurement / Compliance

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATION

To request Board approval of the attached Naming Rights Policy, which defines procedures for naming buildings, spaces, revenue vehicles (ferries), and/or programs in recognition of philanthropic contributions or exceptional service.

DATE AND IDENTIFICATION OF PRIOR BRIEFING OR AUTHORIZING ACTION [If applicable]:

N/A

ISSUE:

To establish a formal, consistent, and transparent policy regarding the naming of Chatham Area Transit facilities, spaces, revenue vehicles, programs, and other. This policy ensures that naming opportunities align with our mission, maintain high standards, and recognize significant contributions appropriately.

The Federal Transit Administration (FTA), Federal Highway Administration, and the State of Georgia allows transit agencies to sell naming rights and sponsorships for stations and assets. All encourages these public-private partnerships as a way to generate revenue, offset operating and maintenance costs, and fund new transit projects. The FHWA prohibits however naming entire highways, rest stops, etc., with federal funds.

Agencies must ensure the agreements are naming rights agreements and follow these guidelines:

- **Procurement Compliance:** Contracts must be procured openly and competitively in accordance with FTA guidelines and local procurement laws.
- **Asset Use:** Revenues generated must typically be reinvested back into the transit system.
- **Civil Rights:** Advertising and naming agreements cannot violate Title VI of the Civil Rights Act or equity requirements.

DISCUSSION:

Staff recommends Board approval of Naming Rights policy as another alternative of revenue stream. The process will be treated as a RFP when selecting a partner, and the expectation of the term agreements will be matching the estimated useful life of the asset to which the naming rights is being proposed.

PROCUREMENT | COMPLIANCE *(provided by the Procurement Officer):*

All proposed naming opportunities must be formally submitted to and approved by the Board of Directors prior to any solicitation or agreement. All agreements shall comply with the organization’s ethical standards, and the organization reserves the right to remove a name if the reputation or actions become inconsistent with the mission, values, or public trust of the organization

FINANCIAL IMPACT *(provided by Chief Financial Officer):*

The Naming Rights Policy provides the Agency with an opportunity to generate revenue through the sale of naming rights to sponsors. The policy is intended to foster community engagement through partnerships with local businesses, enhance the perceived value of Agency assets by associating them with reputable brands, and establish long-term sponsor relationships to support sustained financial growth.

Approval of the Naming Rights Policy has no immediate financial impact; however, if approved by the Board of Directors, the policy is expected to create a new funding source for the Agency.

Project Scope Number	FTA/ Grant Number	CAT Budget Line Item	Budget Line-Item Description	Federal Funding Request	State Funding Request	Local Funding	Total Funding Amount
				0.00	0.00	\$0.00	\$0.00
TOTAL SECTION FUNDS:							\$0.00

POLICY ANALYSIS:

- Where direction is silent in policy, it is appropriate for staff to draft and recommend policy to the Board.

NEXT STEPS:

Upon the Board of Directors’ approval staff will implement the Naming Rights Policy

ATTACHMENTS:

Naming Right Policy – Draft version

COMMITTEE ASSIGNMENT:

N/A

PROPOSED MOTION: (to be read into the minutes)

Move to: Request Board of Directors to approve naming rights policy.

REQUIRED SIGNATURES

Department Item Preparer – Prepared by: Victor Colon, Procurement Manager

Department Chief – Reviewed by: Staphanie Cutter, Executive Director/CEO

Procurement | Compliance – Procurement and Compliance Reviewed by: Victor Colon, Procurement Manager

Chief Financial Officer – Financial Impact and Budget Reviewed by: Gloria Royal Interim CFO

Executive Director/CEO - Final Reviewer Staphanie Cutter, Executive Director/CEO

Board of Directors – Final Approval [insert board action]

This section is completed by the Board Administrator

Passed and approved this [insert date] of [insert Month and Year]

Motioned by:

Seconded by:

AGENCY BOARD DESIGNEE:

Board Approval (signed by Board Chair or Board Administrator)

Naming Rights Draft Policy

Revenue Generation: Naming rights/sponsorships are tools for agencies (like FTA grantees) to raise funds for operations/improvements.

Federal Highway (FHWA): Prohibits naming entire highways, rest stops, etc., with federal funds; only acknowledgment signs are permitted, separate from advertising.

Federal Transit Administration (FTA): More flexibility for stations, fleets, etc., but must align with the mission, not discourage ridership, and respect free speech/equal protection.

Purpose:

To set forth the CAT policy for evaluating and processing naming rights proposals for CAT real estate assets such as transit centers, stations, and park and ride lots, as well as for CAT transit assets such as transit shelters, bus lines, and light rail lines.

Scope:

This policy applies to all entities that submit naming rights proposals for CAT real estate assets and/or CAT transit assets. This policy does not apply to advertising on bus vehicles, ferries, transit shelters or other restrictions that limit the ability of CAT to sell naming rights.

Responsibilities:

The CAT Procurement Department, in partnership with Compliance, will manage all documents relating to this policy, and will coordinate with applicable CAT divisions on the review and processing of the transactions. As applicable, each CAT division will be responsible for reviewing and processing applications, drawings, agreements, permits, construction and payments relating to this policy.

Policy:

CAT has a portfolio of real estate and transit assets located throughout Chatham County, with a service area covering approximately 381 square miles and county population of approximately 300,000. This creates unique opportunities for private sponsors to seek naming rights at one or more CAT real estate assets or CAT transit assets, to enhance their brand recognition. CAT is amenable to creating new revenue through sponsorship opportunities in its transit system and is setting forth this policy to establish guidelines by which CAT will consider naming rights proposals for CAT real estate assets and/or CAT transit assets.

Naming Rights Policy

Approved By: Board of Directors on ^

Request for Proposal (RFP). From time to time, CAT may issue an RFP seeking naming rights proposals for one or more CAT real estate assets and/or one or more CAT transit assets. Based upon RFP responses, CAT in its sole discretion may choose to enter into direct negotiations with an RFP respondent for one or more assets, reissue the RFP, take no further action, or take other action as CAT deems appropriate.

Notwithstanding the foregoing, CAT at all times will retain full discretion to receive and process unsolicited naming rights proposals. In the event of unsolicited proposals, CAT further reserves the right to promote competition and transparency by either (i) issuing an RFP for the asset described in the unsolicited proposal, or (ii) contacting similar potential naming rights sponsors to seek additional naming rights proposals.

In addition, even after conducting a process for naming rights, CAT may choose not to sell the naming rights to any particular asset, whenever it reasonably determines that to do so would be contrary to its purpose or its commercial interests.

Nexus Required for Naming Rights. Transit centers, and bus stops within the CAT transit system require geographically accurate names in order for CAT passengers to orient themselves and navigate the transit system. Therefore naming rights proposals for CAT real estate assets and CAT transit assets will only be considered if there is a strong nexus between the proposed naming sponsor and the proposed asset (i.e., a geographic, iconic, historic or other connection). The ability and ease by which CAT passengers will identify, locate and use a location is an essential factor in considering a naming rights proposal. The number of characters in a proposed name will also be evaluated, due to the physical parameters of signage on items such as stations and revenue vehicles. CAT may in its sole discretion include a geographic designation as part of the re-named asset, for instance "Downtown/Your Name Here," in order for CAT passengers to continue to easily navigate the transit system.

Furthermore, proposed names must be consistent with applicable CAT ordinances, rules, regulations and policies. CAT may in its sole discretion deny a naming rights proposal which: (i) violates any applicable CAT ordinances, rules, regulations or policies, (ii) is offensive, discriminatory, or promotes a particular religion or political view, or (iii) is not in the best interest of CAT and/or its passengers.

A written agreement between CAT and the naming rights sponsor, approved as to form by CAT Counsel and Board of Directors, shall be required prior to any re-naming of a CAT real estate asset or CAT transit asset. All Naming rights agreements under this policy will be brought to the CAT Board of Directors for approval. In addition, the CAT Board of Directors will be required to approve any agreements exceeding the maximum amount, or the maximum term permissible.

Term of Agreement. In order to ensure a long-term commitment between CAT and the naming rights sponsor, the minimum term of a naming rights agreement shall be ten years. The agreement shall provide for CAT's ability to terminate the agreement under certain conditions, such as when a naming rights sponsor ceases to exist as an entity.

Naming Rights Policy

Approved By: Board of Directors on ^

Compensation. CAT will receive fair and reasonable compensation for use of its real estate assets and transit assets, based on comparable market rates for similar facilities and markets. CAT may, in its sole discretion, procure the services of a qualified and independent firm that regularly provides naming rights valuations, to assist in CAT's consideration of a naming rights proposal.

Costs Associated with Re-Naming. The naming rights sponsor shall pay for all costs associated with re-naming a CAT real estate asset or CAT transit asset, including but not limited to the costs of replacing and/or supplementing affected signage, system-wide maps, head signs, public materials, websites, graphics, software and CAT systems. Furthermore, the naming rights sponsor shall deposit an amount that equals or exceeds the anticipated cost of removing its name from said CAT real estate asset or CAT transit asset, for use at the expiration or earlier termination of the naming rights agreement.

CAT Asset Inventory. CAT will prepare a list of CAT real estate assets and CAT transit assets which are available for naming rights proposals, and update such list periodically.

Consultant Services. From time to time, CAT may issue an RFP seeking consultant services relating to one or more CAT real estate assets or CAT transit assets, for any or all of the following professional services: (i) identification and/or valuation of assets available for naming rights proposals, (ii) development of a naming rights strategy and marketing plan, (iii) solicitation of potential naming rights sponsors, (iv) negotiation of naming rights agreements, (v) and any other services deemed appropriate to implement this policy. Based upon RFP responses, CAT in its sole discretion may choose to enter into direct negotiations with an RFP respondent, reissue the RFP, take no further action, or take other action as CAT deems appropriate.

Application of Policy. This policy is intended to apply to naming rights proposals submitted after the approval of the policy. Notwithstanding the foregoing, CAT reserves the right to initiate, consider and process the renaming of one or more existing CAT real estate assets or CAT transit assets.

Modifications to Policy. Non-substantive or legally compelled modifications to this policy may be made under the General Manager's authority without further Board approval.