

2: PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT & GUIDING STATEMENTS

INTRODUCTION

Public involvement—whether through direct contact or indirect contact with citizens, stakeholders, elected officials, and other community representatives—is an important part of successful transportation planning. Horizon 2040 relies on the notion that fully understanding the community’s vision for transportation and the dynamics involved in achieving it requires a collaborative approach. As a result, local staff and the project team reached out to the community throughout the planning process and in a variety of ways.

Public engagement was a necessary precursor to the development of guiding statements and understanding of existing conditions. This visioning process gave way to an important early step in developing a long-range transportation plan—establishing goals and objectives. The Horizon 2040 guiding statements reflect the community’s vision for the transportation system. The statements also help identify ways to prioritize recommendations, an important step given the shortage of transportation dollars to fund all identified needs.

More information regarding public engagement can be found in the Horizon 2040 Appendix A (see <http://www.gpats.org/plans/horizon2040>).

Public Engagement

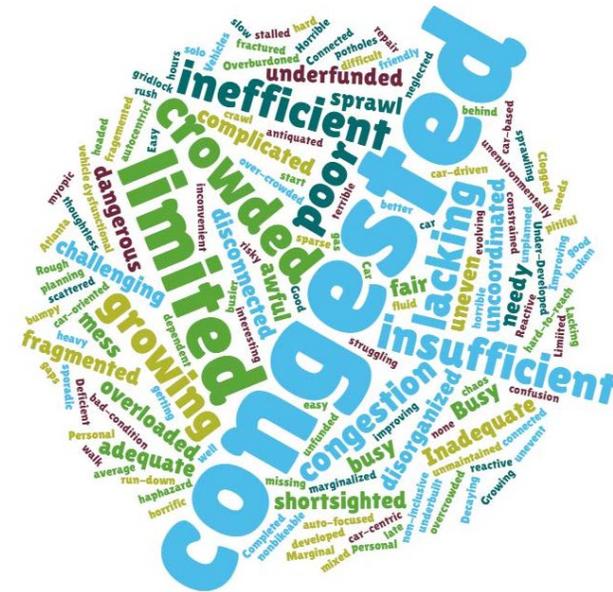
As part of Horizon 2040, GPATS staff engaged municipal and county staff, elected officials, SCDOT, FHWA, State and Federal agencies, public transportation providers and users, freight operators, public service officials, employers, chambers of commerce, economic development agencies, bicycle and pedestrian advocates, community leaders, minority and low income communities, and the public in a variety of ways. To raise awareness, GPATS used television, internet, radio, and print news media outlets as well as multiple social media platforms. Word of mouth also was instrumental in spreading details about meetings and input opportunities.

The first phase of engagement asked participants to identify needs to be addressed in the plan. Throughout the process, the public saw how their input informed the development of the plan and decision-making process. Initial feedback was combined with technical data to create the draft multimodal recommendations presented to the public. This second phase of engagement led to the final recommendations presented in this document.

Engagement for Horizon 2040 includes two regional workshops, 17 sub-regional community meetings, 25 stakeholder and small group interviews, three focus group work sessions, three surveys, and multiple meetings with the GPATS Policy Committee and Study Team. Along the way, several overarching issues emerged:

- **Safety:** Whether walking, biking, or driving an automobile, safety was typically the most frequent comment or request. The public and stakeholders were more likely to identify roadway needs associated with safety. Likewise, participants often noted the desire to bike, walk, and take transit safely.
- **Mobility:** At its core, transportation seeks to connect people to the places they need or want to access. It's not a surprise that people wanted easy access to daily needs and the opportunity to travel using a variety of modes.
- **Land Development:** An inherent relationship exists between land use and transportation. As development occurs and more vehicles take to the road, roadway improvements are needed to reduce traffic congestion. These roadway improvements often enhance access, thus raising land values and attracting more development. This relationship was noted by participants throughout the engagement process.
- **Maintenance:** A general consensus formed around the notion of fixing current infrastructure prior to considering new roadways. Participants in the engagement process noted that maintenance and maximizing existing transportation capacity was a cost-effective solution.

Transportation in the Upstate today...



Our vision for the future...



Activities and Outcomes

Phase 1 Engagement: Visioning

Policy Committee – Kickoff

Engagement for Horizon 2040 kicked off by leading the Policy Committee through a set of facilitated activities at their June 2016 meeting. The committee prioritized elements of transportation planning, discussed specific issues, and helped develop initial catch phrases that informed the guiding statements. This meeting allowed local elected officials to see how their thoughts about transportation needs within the region compared to their constituents.

Regional Workshop 1 – Visioning

The first public meeting for Horizon 2040 was held the evening of September 7, 2016 at the TD Convention Center in Greenville. The format was an interactive open house at which attendees received a brief overview presentation and participated in a series of interactive stations. These stations focused on vision and needs assessment.

- Information Wall
- One Word
- Priority Pyramid
- Thought Wall
- Exit Questionnaire
- More or Less
- Roadways
- Bike and Pedestrian
- Transit

Together with the sub-regional community meetings, more than 200 people attended the in-person workshops and provided more than 600 mapping data points, 1,000 written comments, and 200 priority pyramid game boards.

Sub-Regional Community Meetings – Round 1

GPATS held eight sub-regional community meetings throughout the study area to provide the public easy access to at least one meeting. These meetings included the same facilitated activities seen at the first Regional Workshop.

- Easley – October 3, 2016
- Williamston – October 10, 2016
- Mauldin – October 11, 2016
- Fountain Inn – October 12, 2016
- Clemson – October 13, 2016
- Greer – October 17, 2016
- Travelers Rest – October 18, 2016
- Greenville – October 20, 2016

Community Surveys

The first phase of engagement included two surveys. The design of both surveys was similar where possible to ensure results could be cross-tabulated. An online survey created using MetroQuest launched at the first Regional Workshop and remained active through February 2017. More than 1,400 surveys were received, generating 33,000+ data points, 12,000+ map markers, and 1,800+ written comments.

The second survey was a statistically-valid survey distributed to a random sample of households. The goal was to obtain completed surveys from at least 400 households, and 525 residents completed the survey. The overall results for the sample of 525 households have a precision of at least +/-4.3% with a 95% level of confidence.



Phase 2 Engagement: Recommendations Development and Prioritization

Focus Group Work Sessions

Three meetings, each focusing on a different transportation mode, were held on March 27 and 28, 2017. Technical professionals and advocates for the modes participated in the work sessions to discuss infrastructure needs in the GPATS region. The meetings helped determine the direction of the Long-Range Transportation Plan and the best way to present recommendations. The focus groups looked at roadways, bike and pedestrian, and transit infrastructure.

Sub-Regional Community Meetings – Round 2

A second round of sub-regional community meetings was held in May and June 2017 to encourage widespread participation in the review of recommendations and selection of priorities. The meetings served as the public's opportunity to weigh in on draft recommendations for various modes based on input and data gathered in Phase 1. The meetings were held as follows:

- Easley – May 15, 2017
- Greenville – May 16, 2017
- Fountain Inn – May 18, 2017
- Clemson – May 23, 2017
- Williamston – May 30, 2017
- Travelers Rest – June 1, 2017
- Mauldin – June 5, 2017
- Greer – June 6, 2017
- Eastside – June 8, 2017

Regional Workshop 2 – Recommendations

The second regional workshop was held in the evening of August 29, 2017 at the TD Convention Center in Greenville. This open house-style meeting included an overview presentation and several stations at which draft recommendations were presented. The stations included infrastructure standards and examples for each improvement method. An exit questionnaire was provided that asked participants to assign \$100 to various transportation improvements and to gauge how well the Horizon 2040 process and outcome addressed the plan's guiding statements.

Online Survey

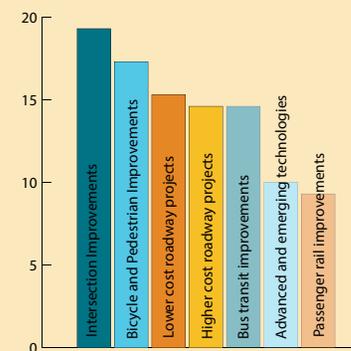
An online survey was distributed to mirror the exit questionnaire collected at the second regional workshop. Combined with responses to the exit questionnaire from the workshop, 125 surveys were received to provide insight into funding priorities and how the plan addressed its guiding statements.



Horizon 2040 Engagement: At a Glance

The two phases of engagement were designed to build upon one another and provide data on par with technical information collected throughout the process. Where possible, similar activities were used in various outreach channels so results could be tabulated in a way that showed general trends and consensus. In turn, these trends helped GPATS staff better articulate the guiding statements and establish a coordinated set of multimodal recommendations that address those statements.

The second regional workshop and follow up survey asked participants how they would spend \$100 on transportation improvements in the region. The result echoed what was heard throughout the process—that the Greenville region needs a more balanced multimodal transportation system that aligns transportation needs with broader initiatives tied to quality of life and economic vibrancy.



GUIDING STATEMENTS

The guiding statements represent six interrelated value statements established in accordance with national, state, and regional long-range planning goals. The guiding statements, which reflect the region's transportation needs and desires, provided direction throughout the planning process and helped inform the prioritization of recommendations. Each statement consists of a key phrase (i.e. guiding principle) with supporting description. The principles are further clarified by a trio of planning goals.



Culture & Environment

Enhance the region's quality of life by preserving and promoting its valued places and natural assets.

Local, state, and federal planning guidelines have evolved over recent decades to place additional emphasis on the role transportation plays in conserving the environment, preserving our neighborhoods, and protecting the quality of life. Throughout the Upstate, this process has been aided through land use planning, development controls, environmental planning, and socioeconomic awareness.

- Protect and enhance the natural and social environment by using context sensitive transportation strategies.
- Minimize direct and indirect environmental impacts of the transportation system.
- Promote consistency between transportation improvements, land use decisions, and economic development patterns.



Economic Vitality

Support regional economic vitality by making it easier to move people and freight within and through the region.

Ensuring transportation investments support broader economic vitality goals in the region is critical. Good transportation investments address industry needs such as shipping goods, encouraging economic growth, and improving access to regional assets. Transportation improvements should help position the region and its jurisdictions to be competitive in local, regional, and national markets.

- Highlight transportation recommendations that enable global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency.
- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight within the region and to other areas.
- Leverage gateways and aesthetics to create an atmosphere that fosters economic investment.



Growth & Development

Make traveling more efficient by coordinating transportation investments with land use decisions.

Over time, the transportation network can influence development patterns, affect property values, and help shape quality of life. How communities and regions choose to develop, in turn, impacts the practicality and accessibility of bicycling, walking, and taking public transportation.

- Prepare for continued population growth by coordinating transportation strategies with land use initiatives to foster vibrant and livable communities.
- Connect people to jobs and educational opportunities through coordinated transportation and land use investment decisions.
- Promote mixed-use developments supportive of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit activity in town centers and along priority corridors.



Mobility & Accessibility

Provide a balanced transportation system that makes it easier to bike, walk, and take transit.

Streets have increasingly become unsafe and inaccessible for non-motorized users over the last several decades as auto-oriented growth influenced street design. Strategic investment in major roadways should be balanced with improvements to the bicycle, pedestrian, transit, and rail networks to keep people and goods moving. Enhanced mobility and accessibility provides and creates transportation options by combining multimodal improvements with most roadway enhancement.

- Provide desirable and user-friendly transportation options for all user groups regardless of socioeconomic status or physical ability.
- Support a fully integrated multimodal network that advances the concept of complete streets.
- Expand and maintain a network of bicycle, pedestrian, and transit infrastructure that connects homes, activity centers, and complementary amenities.



Safety & Security

Promote a safe and secure transportation system by reducing crashes, making travel reliable and predictable, and improving emergency response.

Reducing transportation fatalities and serious injuries requires an integrated approach to safety in motorized and non-motorized transportation projects. Additionally, encouraging a connected street network improves emergency response times.

- Improve the safety of the transportation system for all user groups regardless of socioeconomic status or physical ability.
- Increase the reliability, predictability, and efficiency of the transportation experience through system improvements and enhanced communication.
- Improve safety and security by mitigating potential conflicts and delays at high-crash locations and rail crossing sites.



System Preservation & Efficiency

Extend the life of the transportation system and promote fiscal responsibility by emphasizing maintenance and operational efficiency.

A transportation network with high mobility helps sustain and enhance economic development. Local and regional mobility requires an approach that maximizes the capacity of the transportation system. This systems management approach includes monitoring and addressing pavement quality and ensuring ancillary infrastructure such as traffic signals and Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) infrastructure are properly deployed.

- Increase the lifespan of existing infrastructure and ensure the optimal use of transportation infrastructure.
- Identify and prioritize infrastructure preservation and rehabilitation projects such as pavement management and signal system upgrades.
- Increase the use of innovative transportation technology to enhance the efficiency of the existing transportation system and to be better prepared for emerging vehicle technologies.