

# 1: INTRODUCTION AND PROCESS OVERVIEW

## INTRODUCTION

Transportation is a fundamental part of daily life. It affects everyone in many ways and plays a critical role in shaping a region's physical and social infrastructure. Reliable access to efficient and safe modes of transportation goes a long way toward improving the region's economic equity, environmental footprint, and overall quality of life. *Horizon 2040*, the LRTP for the Greenville-Pickens area, outlines a regional strategy for providing a connected transportation system that accommodates existing and future mobility needs. *Horizon 2040* is a financially constrained plan, meaning it identifies projects and programs that can reasonably be implemented with anticipated funding levels through the year 2040. In response to federal mandates and expressed wishes of local residents, this plan addresses all transportation modes, including automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, air, and rail.

## BACKGROUND

The scope of *Horizon 2040* included establishing goals, reviewing current plans and studies, analyzing current transportation conditions, engaging regional residents and stakeholders, identifying multimodal recommendations, and developing a financially-constrained plan. GPATS' Study Team and Policy Committee offered feedback throughout plan development.

### About GPATS

GPATS stands for the Greenville-Pickens Area Transportation Study, the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Greenville area, which includes a significant portion of Greenville and Pickens Counties, and smaller portions of Anderson, Laurens, and Spartanburg Counties. GPATS facilitates a regional,

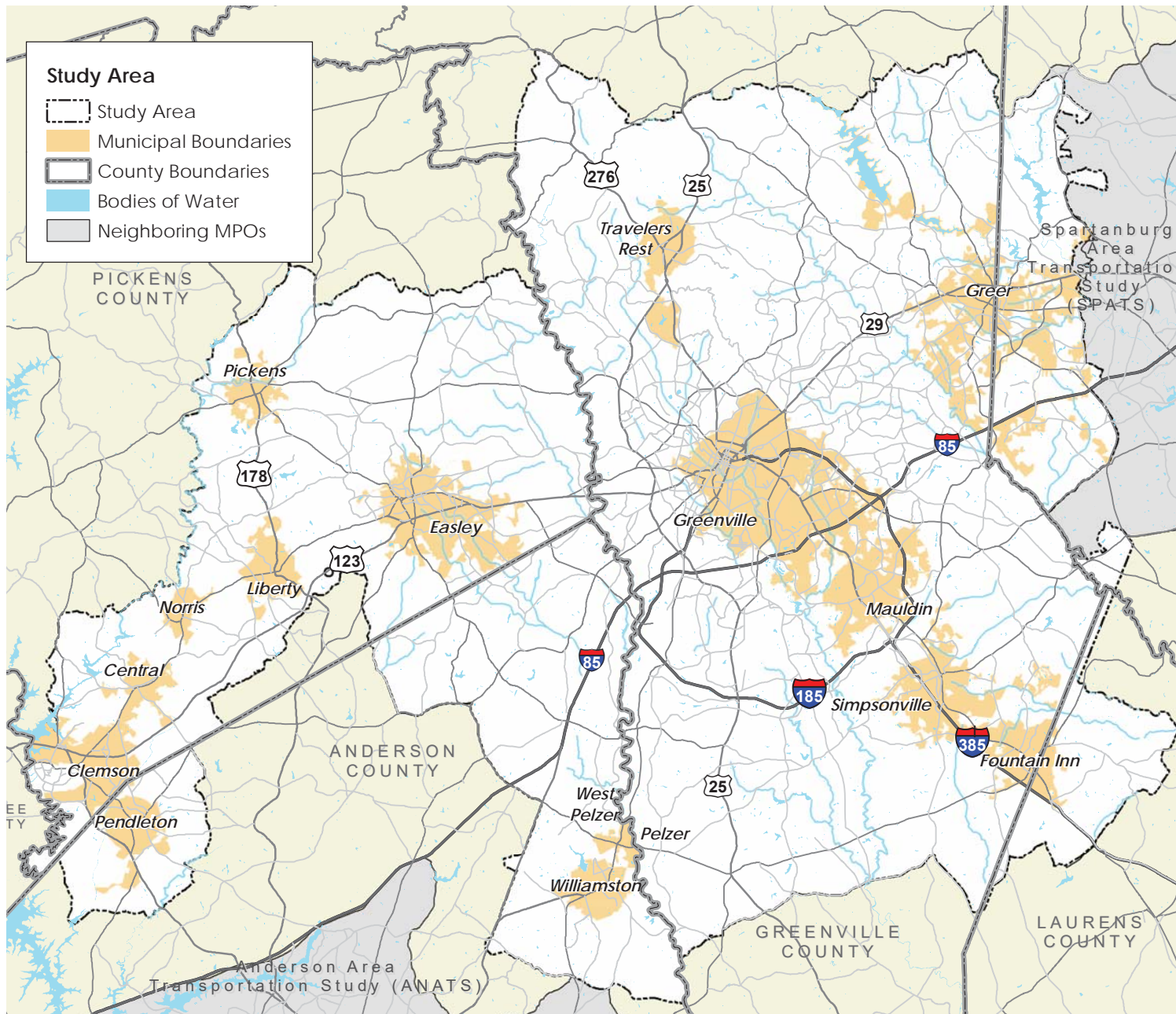
cooperative planning process for a 777-square-mile area that is home to more than 500,000 residents. This process is used to allocate the region's state and federal transportation funds.

### Reason for the Plan

GPATS reviews the LRTP every five years and completes a major update every 10 years. *Horizon 2040* is the first major update to the region's LRTP since 2007. The plan fulfills federal requirements and serves as the region's transportation vision. It characterizes current and future transportation needs, outlines the region's long-range transportation goals, identifies multimodal transportation strategies to address needs through the year 2040, and documents long-term opportunities beyond current funding capabilities. Federal funding cannot be allocated to transportation projects unless they are included in the financially-constrained plan. In other words, GPATS cannot plan to spend more money than it reasonably expects to receive.

### FAST Act

*Horizon 2040* is shaped by several elements, including federal legislation. The plan is governed by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), which was signed into law on December 4, 2015. The goals of the FAST Act include strengthening highways, establishing a performance-based program, creating jobs and supporting economic growth, supporting the United States DOT's (USDOT) safety agenda, streamlining the FHWA's transportation programs, accelerating project delivery, and promoting innovation. Additionally, the FAST Act is the first federal legislation that provides a dedicated source of federal funding for freight projects. This legislation extends through fiscal year 2020.



## Study Area

GPATS is responsible for transportation policy development, planning, and programming for 777 square miles of the Upstate, including portions of Greenville, Pickens, Anderson, Laurens, and Spartanburg Counties. The planning area includes locations in which growth is likely to occur through 2040. MPOs are required to evaluate their boundary after each U.S. decennial census to ensure the planning area is inclusive of all future urbanized areas. As of 2017, more than 500,000 people lived in the GPATS region.

GPATS is just one of several regional entities tasked with transportation planning in the Upstate. The Spartanburg Area Transportation Study (SPATS) is the MPO for the Spartanburg urbanized area, which includes Spartanburg and seven other cities and towns as well as portions of unincorporated Spartanburg County. Anderson Area Transportation Study (ANATS) is the MPO for the Anderson urbanized area, which includes the cities of Anderson and Belton along with portions of Anderson County. Areas of the Upstate outside of the three MPOs are assisted by the Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG).

### Planning Process

*Horizon 2040* represents a coordinated effort to establish a transportation vision for the region and identify multimodal projects to achieve it. The planning process requires cooperation between multiple jurisdictions, key stakeholders, and citizens to accurately reflect the region’s needs. *Horizon 2040* is an important step toward ensuring the region’s limited transportation dollars will address the most critical needs.

The *Horizon 2040* process began with a review of socioeconomic and transportation conditions. The project team facilitated the establishment of guiding principles and goals and identified multimodal recommendations. Once the recommendations were developed, a prioritization process was created and available resources through the year 2040 were identified. The financially constrained plan acts as a blueprint for transportation projects through 2040 and will be reevaluated in five years.



## Public Engagement

Successful planning projects begin with strong citizen involvement. For *Horizon 2040*, the robust public engagement process was crucial to ensure the project team understood local dynamics and appreciated the region's challenges. As a result, local staff and the project team engaged the community multiple times. More detail on the public engagement activities can be found in Chapter 2.

OUTREACH TARGET SUMMARY				
	Public	Elected Officials	Stakeholders	Technical Staff
Policy Committee Meeting		●		○
Study Team Meetings			○	●
Regional Workshops	●	●	●	○
Sub-Regional Community Meetings	●	●	●	○
Stakeholders and Small Group Interviews		○	●	○
Focus Group Work Sessions		○	●	●
Statistically-Valid Survey	●	●	○	○
MetroQuest Survey	●	●	●	○

- Primary Target
- Secondary Target

### What We Heard

The Greenville area includes a diverse collection of communities. To maximize public input, the engagement process included various ways to connect with these communities. Along the way, several overarching issues emerged:

- The region's rapid growth is leading to increased congestion. There is an urgent need for a coordinated response.
- The popularity of active transportation continues to grow and more residents are demanding more and better opportunities to walk, bike, and ride transit.
- Improvements to the region's transportation system enhance broader economic vitality and quality of life initiatives.

The project team considered these major themes and specific comments when creating the guiding statements and choosing the projects presented in the chapters that follow.

## PREVIOUS PLANS

*Horizon 2040* builds on recommendations from previous land use and transportation plans. The lists to the right show the key plans reviewed when preparing this plan. More information can be found in Appendix B (<http://www.gpats.org/plans/horizon2040>).

## Transportation and Comprehensive Plans

The region's cities, towns, and counties have completed a variety of plans that affect future transportation recommendations, including comprehensive plans, LRTP, corridor studies, and transit plans. Some of the key plans reviewed include:

- Clemson Area Transit Bus Reimagining Study (2017)
- Anderson County Comprehensive Plan (2016)
- GCEDC Multimodal Transit Corridor Study and Personal Rapid Transit Evaluation (2010/2014)
- SCDOT Regional Transit and Coordination Plan: Appalachian Region (2014)
- City of Clemson Comprehensive Plan 2024 (2014)
- South Carolina 2040 Strategic Corridors Plan (2014)
- City of Mauldin Comprehensive Plan (2009/2014)
- Pickens County Comprehensive Plan 2030 (2010)
- Greenlink Transit Vision and Master Plan (2010)
- Plan-it Greenville (2009)
- Imagine Greenville County (2009)
- GPATS 2035 LRTP (2007)
- Woodruff Road Corridor Study (2007)
- Travelers Rest Comprehensive Plan (2006)

## Bicycle and Pedestrian Plans

Several municipalities in the region have completed bicycle, pedestrian, and/or trail master plans or studies that offered guidance when developing an initial set of recommendations. These plans include detailed facility recommendations as well as ways to make active transportation more attractive long term. The list below is not all-inclusive, but captures some of the most recent and more major studies.

- Green Crescent Trail Feasibility Study (2016)
- Town of Pendleton Bike/Pedestrian Plan (2016)
- City of Travelers Rest Bike Master Plan (2015)
- Town of Williamston Bike/Pedestrian Master Plan (2015)
- Greenville County Safe Routes to School (2013)
- City of Greenville Bicycle Master Plan (2011)
- Greenville County Greenways Master Plan (2010)
- City of Easley Bike Master Plan (2010)

## USING THE PLAN

At a minimum, L RTPs envision transportation enhancements and inventory multimodal projects to achieve that vision. *Horizon 2040* integrates these two tasks in a series of chapters dedicated to specific travel modes, though no element was created in isolation. Instead, the project team analyzed and developed recommendations for the different modes in tandem to ensure an integrated transportation system that efficiently moves people and goods within and beyond the Upstate is created.

The recommendations in this plan represent the collective vision for a safe, multimodal, and interconnected transportation system that supports continued economic development and respects the natural, historic, and social resources vital to the region's sustainability. In addition to this initial chapter, *Horizon 2040* includes the following chapters:

### *Chapter 2 – Public Engagement and Guiding Statements*

Provides an overview of public engagement strategies and outcomes and describes the plan's vision and guiding statements.

### *Chapter 3 – State of the Region*

Offers a high-level socioeconomic assessment organized around people (i.e., growth and demographics) and prosperity (i.e., employment and commuting).

### *Chapter 4 – Roadways*

Describes existing and projected roadway conditions as well as the corridor and intersection projects that can address the region's most pressing needs.

### *Chapter 5 – Bicycle and Pedestrian*

Outlines strategies to make it safer and more efficient to travel by bike and on foot.

### *Chapter 6 – Public Transportation*

Summarizes transit, passenger rail, passenger aviation, and shared-ride strategies to make the region's transportation system more accessible.

### *Chapter 7 – Freight*

Focuses on ways to make the movement of goods by highway and rail more efficient and economically sustainable.

### *Chapter 8 – Transportation Demand and Emerging Technologies*

Gives insight on the region's approach to managing transportation demand and accommodating new and emerging transportation technologies.

### *Chapter 9 – Performance Measures*

Discusses the role of performance-based planning as well as new requirements for monitoring and evaluation.

### *Chapter 10 – Financial Plan and Implementation*

Reveals the list of funded projects and an action plan to achieve near- and long-term goals.

Appendices to this report can be found at <http://www.gpats.org/plans/horizon2040>.