

**MINUTES**  
**GPATS POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE**  
**May 13, 2024**  
**County Square – Council Chambers**  
**10:00 a.m.**

**In person and remote participation by Committee members**

**MEMBERS PRESENT:** Chairman Senator Turner, Vice-Chairman Councilor Kirven, Senator Cash, Senator Rice, Representative Collins, Representative Elliott, Representative Vaughan, Councilor Linvill, Commissioner Christopher, Mayor Amidon, Mayor McLeer, Mayor Merritt, Mayor Shewmaker, Mayor Talbert, GTA Chair Amanda Warren, and Keith Brockington.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** T. Brown, J. Chandler, J. Chasteen, K. Cleek, T. Coker, S. Davis, E. Dillon, R. Eckenrode, C. Hill, E. Hunt, A. Ikein, S. Jackson-Amell, C. Lewis, C. Link, C. Lucas, B. Olson, C. Owens, A. Stewart, and R. Tolson.

**CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME**

Chairman Senator Turner noted the insufficient number of members in attendance to reach a quorum at 10:00 a.m. and delayed calling the meeting to order in hopes of reaching a quorum. Chairman Turner called the meeting to order at 10:12 a.m. stating the committee will begin with informational agenda items while waiting to reach a quorum.

**PUBLIC COMMENT**

There were no individuals signed up for public comment.

**SCDOT PROJECT STATUS UPDATE**

Casey Lucas, Project Manager with the SCDOT, addressed members with a project update presentation:

- Upcoming Projects:
  - Garlington Road Corridor Study – Feasibility Study in progress. Draft Feasibility Report due May 2024 and findings will be reported to GPATS.
  - Pelham & Haywood intersection – Planning phase is in progress. Alternative analysis underway and estimated completion is spring 2024.
  - Pleasantburg & Rutherford intersection – Planning phase is in progress and traffic study is complete. Traffic analysis and alternatives under discussion now will tentatively provide recommendations to GPATS July 2024.
  
- Projects in Design:
  - Town of Central Connector – \$643,000 GPATS TAP funding and preliminary design is underway. Construction expected to begin in Spring 2026.
  - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) – Right of Way (ROW) plans completed and funds obligated. ROW acquisition is underway and construction anticipated to begin in spring 2027.
  - S-107 Butler Road – Right of way (ROW) plans completed and ROW acquisitions are underway. On schedule for December 2024 let date.

- SC-183 Corridor (GPATS) – One consultant for two projects developed on independent timelines. Acquire turnkey consultant to design with Pickens County side of project.
- SC-183 & Jameson Road Intersection – Intersection Improvement design revisited due to the widening of SC-183 Corridor. Traffic study completed, alternative analysis underway and anticipate reporting findings to GPATS in July Study Team meeting. Expect to revise construction plans and update project schedule.
- West Georgia Road – City of Simpsonville has federal earmark of \$2.7 and construction was pushed to fiscal year 2025 to allow time for GPATS funds to be added to the project. Tentative let date is December 2024.
- Projects in Construction:
  - Roper Mountain Road (RMR)/Roper Mountain Road Ext. (RMRE): RMR – Curb and gutter and storm drainage 90% complete. Roper Mountain Road Ext. (RMRE) - Phase II of new bridge work over Rocky Creek continuing. Bridge deck concrete completed.
- Bridge Projects:
  - S-154 over Huff Creek – Non-guideshare bridge replacement in Greenville County awarded to Dane Construction. Bridge demo is underway and drilled shaft work is scheduled for this month.
- TAP Projects in Construction:
  - Riverside Middle School Sidewalk – GPATS TAP project was let in March of 2024 and awarded to Southern Concrete & Construction. On schedule with estimated completion in August of this year.
  - Woodside Park Connector and Streetscape – City of Fountain Inn projects let in October 2023 and awarded to Eagle CP Builders. 75% of sidewalk has been completed and silt fence for Woodside Park Connector has been placed and pedestrian bridge plans have been submitted for review.

Ms. Lucas made herself available for questions.

Representative Neal Collins, Pickens County Legislative Delegation, asked in reference to SC-183 & Jameson Road intersection project, would update be given at the next GPATS meeting in July.

Ms. Lucas replied that is correct.

## **OLD BUSINESS**

### **GPATS Congestion Management Process (CMP)**

Keith Brockington, GPATS Transportation Manager, addressed members with an update on the CMP. He explained the process is ongoing and Kimley-Horn and Associates is currently working on getting a CMP report for GPATS Study Team in July in hopes of an approval by Policy Committee in August. Mr. Brockington said GPATS is pleased to get the CMP completed before the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) starts next year. He added should there be any delays, the CMP could still be presented to Policy Committee for approval in October but the hope is to have it completed before then.

### **FTA Section 5310 Call for Projects**

Mr. Brockington updated members stating GPATS has not yet received any applications for FTA Section 5310 funds and the Call for Projects began at the beginning of this year.

He explained there was a plan put in place by GPATS Policy Committee to avoid funds lapsing altogether in the case of no applicants. That plan being if the funds have not been applied for by the August Policy Committee meeting, the lapsing funds would automatically rollover to GTA/Greenlink.

Councilor Kirven, GPATS Vice-Chairman, asked if 5310 funds are for transit needs.

Mr. Brockington explained they are for enhanced mobility for elderly and/or disabled persons. They are federal funds (FTA funds) with a local match.

Chairman Senator Turner announced that a quorum had been reached and that the members would now look at item number two of the agenda.

### **APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 26, 2024 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Chairman Turner asked if anyone had any amendments to the minutes.

Mayor Terry Merritt, City of Mauldin, requested a correction on page two in reference to Projects in Design and the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) anticipated construction start time. The minutes incorrectly stated 2024 and should be corrected to read 2027.

**MOTION:** By Councilor Kirven, seconded by Mayor McLeer to approve the February 26, 2024 minutes with one correction as stated. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

### **GPATS TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) FY2024 PROJECTS**

Anna Stewart, GPATS Transportation Planner, stated GPATS currently has \$2,486,109 in TAP funds available for new projects. Ms. Stewart presented members with the two TAP applications and summaries, which included:

#### **Upstate Greenways & Trails Alliance– Bryson Elementary to S. Kings Drive Multi Use Trail**

- Requesting \$1,127,441.60
- Local Match: 20%
- Score: 18 out of 21 points
- Description: Construction of 0.9 miles of trail that will connect to the broader Swamp Rabbit Trail network that is being built. Connects five residential neighborhoods to Bryson Elementary School.

#### **City of Greenville – Verdae Boulevard Swamp Rabbit Trail Pedestrian Bridge**

- Requesting \$2,486,109
- Local Match: 49.6%
- Score: 18.67 out of 21 points
- Description: Construction of SRT Pedestrian bridge to move pedestrians over Verdae Boulevard.

Ms. Stewart explained the GPATS Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinating Committee reviewed the applications and recommended approval of the City of Greenville's application. She stated GPATS

Study Team also reviewed the applications and recommended approval of the City of Greenville's application.

Ms. Stewart asked if there were any questions or comments.

Mayor G.P. McLeer, City of Fountain Inn, stated his appreciation for the scoring and noted how close the two applicants' scores ended up being. He also noted how close the total criteria rankings ended up being and that the biggest gap appears to be on the "local-match funding higher than the 20% minimum". Mayor McLeer also commented on the second criteria score "completes planned corridors, fills gaps in network" and the third criteria score "completes regional planned corridors, fills in gaps in a regional network" should possibly be weighted greater compared to other criteria. He also pointed out the vision for the Swamp Rabbit Trail is the idea to connect the county. He noted smaller communities and non-profits may not be able to fund more than the 20%.

Mayor McLeer stated the value of the project and connections to Heritage Park and Fountain Inn High School along with five neighborhoods connections should be taken into consideration. The application is for 0.9 miles; however, the entire project covers 3.5 miles total. He added the City of Fountain Inn will be adding funds to this project to get within 50 – 75 yards of the county line.

Mayor Paul Shewmaker, City of Simpsonville, stated his city has been budgeting every year to extend this particular project down to Heritage Park and except for one non-interested, unresponsive property owner everything else is in place. Mayor Shewmaker asked that the committee consider the miles of trail the UGATA project will eventually connect versus one pedestrian bridge.

Councilor Kirven, GPATS Vice-Chairman, inquired if there was a way to share the award between the two applicants as opposed to having to choose one over the other.

Mr. Brockington replied, unfortunately, given the constraints on federal TAP funds, GPATS is not able to do that. The main reason is City of Greenville applied for all available funds. If they had applied for a portion and UGATA applied for a portion of total available funds, then GPATS could possibly fund both. Mr. Brockington explained in the past, GPATS decreased amounts applied for in order to award multiple projects and was reprimanded by the federal government when renewing the federal certification. Mr. Brockington explained the projects that are applied for are ranked based on their application and the application is based on the amount of funding being requested. GPATS has to rank the applications and approve or deny based on the original application. If that application is altered or adjusted in any way, then it is changing the nature of the project and/or application. GPATS has to rank the projects and approve or deny those projects as applied for. The amount of money applied for by both applicants totaled together are above the funds actually available.

Councilor Kirven questioned the possibility of having another Call for Projects.

Mr. Brockington explained GPATS usually has one annual Call for Projects at the beginning of the calendar year and a formal Call for Projects after the February Policy Committee meeting. GPATS then does the evaluations and has an approval in May. With a balance remaining, there is nothing to prevent GPATS from issuing an additional Call for Projects but since the federal government decides the allocation amounts and SCDOT informs GPATS of the allocation amount once a year, GPATS typically only has one per year.

Councilor Kirven asked if there is a deadline or a way to codify both applications, giving the two applicants time to discuss a way for both projects to receive some funding.

Mr. Brockington responded the only deadline is the funds are subject to lapse within four years from the time the funds are awarded.

Mayor Shewmaker, City of Simpsonville, asked for clarification on allocation amounts and unspent funds.

Mr. Brockington replied GPATS allocations do not change based on applications for funds but are based on Urbanized Area (UZA) population. The unspent funds will go into the TAP balance; part of what is available today is TAP balance. The annual allocation for TAP is about \$1.1 million per year.

Mayor McLeer asked if there is a balance of TAP funds, does it have to roll over to next year's allocation or is it possible to issue another Call for Projects.

Someone added the option of the two applicants discussing possibilities to find a way they could both receive some funding.

Mr. Brockington answered yes, if the committee chooses that option, another Call for Projects could be issued and any applications received could be reviewed by the Study Team in the July meeting and voted on in August by the Policy Committee.

Chairman Turner asked if the Policy Committee has the authority to choose outside of the point system.

Mr. Brockington replied the Policy Committee has the authority to vote outside of the point system since members have voiced their discussions and justifications for doing so. The scoring is more of an evaluation for the Study Team and projects cannot be changed around to fit different funding arrangements.

Mayor Merritt said he felt the funding should go towards the safety of children and connecting numerous municipalities.

Mayor Brandy Amidon, City of Travelers Rest, commented on the importance of making sure the funds are equitable to the different areas. Mayor Amidon said she could not speak highly enough of UGATA and using that as a transportation link and also as an economic development that connection to the other cities is very important and she appreciates that group. She added that a pedestrian bridge versus a walkway is more information or measurement to be considered; as well as, the number of people impacted as a whole while making sure the funds are spread around to other municipalities as well.

SCDOT Commissioner, Pamela Christopher, suggested possibly once an applicant has applied and GPATS determines the criteria has been met, applicants could meet with staff before the evaluations. Commissioner Christopher added if meeting and discussing projects could be worked into the process, she believes that would benefit applicants, communities, and those making decisions on awarding funds.

Mr. Brockington stated staff and the Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinating Committee could meet with applicants before the submittal. Mr. Brockington noted this hasn't come up in recent years due to typically receiving only one application, if any. He agrees there is always room to improve how projects are evaluated and a pre-submittal meeting with staff is possible.

Councilor Kirven commented on the option of placing the awarding of any TAP funds on hold until the next meeting.

**MOTION:** By Councilor Kirven, seconded by Mayor Merritt to hold the vote off until the July meeting.

Mayor Amidon asked if the motion could be repeated.

Chairman Senator Turner replied the motion was to hold off on voting until the two parties could discuss the matter further and possibly come up with a solution that would benefit them both.

Mayor McLeer stated his reluctance to approve the motion to hold. He said his preference would be to award the UGATA project and re-issue another Call for Projects with the remaining balance or rollover the balance to add to next years' allocation. He said that would be about the amount of money the other applicant has applied for. Mayor McLeer pointed out the hold would delay awarding either party due to Study Team isn't until July and then Policy Committee in August is too long of a delay.

Councilor Kirven suggested the hold motion again stating it would give both applicants time to talk and try to find a resolution that would award them both with certain amounts.

After a few minutes of further discussing options, Councilor Kirven withdrew his motion and Mayor McLeer made a motion.

**MOTION:** By Mayor McLeer, seconded by Mayor Shewmaker to approve and award the TAP funds to Upstate Greenways & Trails Alliance (UGATA) as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

**MOTION:** By Mayor Shewmaker, seconded by Mayor McLeer to direct staff to review the evaluation and recommendation process pertaining to all TAP applications and to use the remaining TAP funds to re-issue a Call for TAP projects this year. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

### **GPATS TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) FY2025-2034 AC#1**

Keith Brockington, GPATS Transportation Manager, addressed members on the proposed 2025-2034 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment AC#1 Financial Statement.

Mr. Brockington described the amendments made to the TIP which include:

- At the request of SCDOT, Batesville Road, Phase II, Corridor Project will be shifted from FY 2024-2026 to FY 2028-2030 due to project still being on hold. Project remains a top priority for GPATS.

- At the request of SCDOT, West Georgia Road at East Standing Springs project will be accelerated to FY 2024 with \$1.5 million in Construction funding due to previous funding and progress made by the West Georgia Road Earmark.
- At the request of SCDOT, addition “Statewide Bridge Preventative Maintenance” package to FY 2025:
  - P041689 SC 124 Old Easley Hwy over Saluda River (GRVL) CON \$550,000
  - P041727 SC 418 Over Huff Creek (GRVL)
  - P041672 US 29 Wade Hampton Over MTN Creek (GRVL) CON \$1,100,000
  - P039651 US 278 GEER HWY Over Middle Saluda River (GRVL) CON \$825,000
  - P041716 SC 8 Easley Hwy over US 29 (Anderson) CON \$112,200
  - P041732 SC 81 Anderson Rd over Saluda River & S-4-143 (Anderson) CON \$1,375,000
  - P041720 SC 148 N Hwy over Enoree River (SPBG) CON \$1,375,000
  - P041722 SC 135 Dacusville Hwy over Shoals Creek CON 2,730,000
- Removal of Closed projects from the TIP:
  - 37689RD01 Woodruff Rd/I-85 Interchange Ramp Modifications - Closed
  - 37688RD01 Woodruff Rd (SC 148) and Garlington/Miller - Closed
  - P028935 US 123 Easley - Closed
  - P033666 SC 93 Clemson- Closed
  - P033665 US 276 West Butler Road Mauldin - Closed
  - P026998 Greenville County Poinsett Corridor Pedestrian and Lighting - Closed
  - P028353 S-1136 (Perimeter Road) Resurfacing/Rehabilitation - Closed
  - P030611 SC 93 at Clayton St – Town of Central - Closed
  - P039376 Intersection Improvements S-83 (Old Grove Rd)/ (Bracken Rd) – Closed
- Addition of today’s approved TAP Project.

Mr. Brockington noted the TIP has been advertised from April 21 through May 13 and he made himself available for any comments or questions.

Councilor Kirven asked why the Batesville Road, Phase II, Corridor Project is on hold.

Mr. Brockington explained the hold is due to the project termini is from The Parkway, north of I-85, to Pelham Road, south of I-85. The potential impacts of the ongoing I-85 improvements could affect the Batesville Road project. It simply would not be plausible to start on Batesville Road project while the I-85 improvements have not yet been decided on.

**MOTION:** By Mayor McLeer, seconded by Councilor Kirven to approve FY 2025-2034 AC#1 Transportation Improvement Program as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

**GPATS FY2025 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) UPDATE**

Keith Brockington presented members with the UPWP FY2025 financial statement update. Mr. Brockington stated, on a biennial basis, GPATS is required to amend the UPWP to affirm the FY2025 UPWP financials. This is the second year of the 2024-2025 UPWP, submitted to and accepted by SCDOT, FTA, and FHWA last year.

The full UPWP Document may be found at <https://gpats.org/Programs/UPWP.aspx>.

Mr. Brockington explained GPATS will not be awarding funds for Special Studies this year due to the need for internal planning efforts requiring funding and the following have been added to the UPWP document:

- GPATS Horizon2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan
- GPATS Regional Safety Action Plan (SS4A)
- US-29 Corridor Study

Mr. Brockington made himself available for questions.

**MOTION:** By Mayor McLeer, seconded by Mayor Shewmaker to approve GPATS FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program Affirmation Amendment as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

### **GPATS ANDERSON COUNTY SC-81 CORRIDOR STUDY**

Ryan Eckenrode, Project Manager and Senior Traffic Engineer with AECOM, presented members with the SC-81 Corridor Study. A condensed version can be found on GPATS home page at [www.gpats.org](http://www.gpats.org).

Mr. Eckenrode summarized the study while discussing plans, stakeholder meetings, schedules, corridor characteristics, existing conditions, short-term solutions, long-term solutions, and recommendations. He explained the study area begins at the intersection of Lake Road / Wren School Road and ends at the intersection of Powdersville Main / Piedmont Road and is classified as a minor arterial road. AECOM used a high 2.5% annual growth rate for the twenty-year projections. There were twenty-two intersections within the study.

Mr. Eckenrode stated the citizen comments and public participation was much better than expected. He added the number one comment referred to Old Williamston Road intersection and the number two comment related to the Circle Road intersection.

After discussing numerous aspects of the study, Mr. Eckenrode asked if anyone had any questions.

Keith Brockington reminded everyone a condensed version of the study is available on [www.gpats.org](http://www.gpats.org).

Mr. Brockington explained to members the importance of the study and how the data could help in evaluating, and further development of, projects in the future. This study will provide projects that can be put in the GPATS Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

**MOTION:** By Councilor Kirven, seconded by Mayor Shewmaker to approve and adopt GPATS Anderson County SC-81 Corridor Study, as presented, as a GPATS Study. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

SCDOT Commissioner, Pamela Christopher, informed members that at the May 16<sup>th</sup> SCDOT Commission meeting the Pavement Improvement Program will be discussed. Commissioner



Christopher also said SCDOT has been very busy working on a dam failure and storm cleanup in Anderson and Laurens County. She also noted GPATS and SPATS are both meeting at the same time and on the same days making it difficult for SCDOT to attend both meetings.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

Without objection Chairman Senator Turner adjourned the meeting at 11:31 a.m.

*Cleo A. Hill*

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Submitted by Recording Secretary

Cleo A. Hill