

MINUTES
GPATS POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
May 15, 2023
Suite 400 – County Square
10:00 a.m.

In person and remote participation by Committee members

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Senator Rice, Senator Allen, Representative Collins, Representative Elliott, Representative Vaughan, Councilor Kirven, Councilor Linvill, Councilor Russo, Commissioner Metcalf, Mayor Amidon, Mayor Halfacre, Mayor McLeer, Mayor Merritt, Mayor Sanders, Mayor Shewmaker, Mayor Womack, GTA Chairwoman Smith, and Keith Brockington.

OTHERS PRESENT: D. Beaty, A. Bodner, L. Bridges, P. Butler, J. Chandler, K. Cleek, T. Coker, E. Dillon, H. Gamble, C. Hill, T. Houck, A. Ikein, S. Jackson-Amell, R. Jeffers-Campbell, J. Keel, C. Link, C. Lucas, and A. Stewart.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Senator Rice called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

APPROVAL OF THE FEBRUARY 27, 2023 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: By Mayor Merritt, seconded by GTA Chairwoman Smith to approve February 27, 2023 minutes. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no individuals signed up for public comment.

REPORT ON MARCH 6, 2023 SUB-COMMITTEE MEETING

Chairman Senator Rice briefly discussed the March 6 Sub-Committee meeting explaining the reason for that meeting being cost overruns on the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) project along with the Butler Road project. Chairman Rice explained sometimes dollar amounts are put in place for a particular project and oftentimes, those numbers increase due to actual costs being more than anticipated. He cautioned members to be aware that costs are going up and in any project, the numbers used to budget will likely go up over time. Chairman Rice also mentioned Keith Brockington can clarify funding sources on any project.

SCDOT PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Casey Lucas, Project Manager with the SCDOT, addressed the Committee members explaining most projects are guideshare and are 80% federal funding and 20% state match. She reiterated the majority of her updates to the Policy Committee members are

guideshare funded, except for a few state bridge replacement projects. The bridge replacements are in GPATS boundaries but are state funded.

Ms. Lucas continued with a project update presentation included in the agenda packets:

- Upcoming Projects:
 - Garlington Road Corridor Study – In planning phase. Consultant selected for feasibility study and expected completion is Spring 2024.
- Projects in Design:
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) – Right of Way (ROW) has been obligated and kickoff meeting is scheduled for May 16, 2023.
 - S-107 Butler Road – Right of way (ROW) plans completed and ROW acquisitions are underway. On schedule for December 2024 let date.
- TAP Projects in Construction:
 - Fountain Inn Woodside Streetscape – Plans are completed. On schedule to be let in August of 2023.
 - Fountain Inn Woodside Connector - Project plans are completed. Was awarded additional funds by GPATS policy committee in October 2022. To be let in August 2023.
 - Riverside Middle School Sidewalk – Project plans are completed. Was awarded additional TAP funds October 2022. To avoid construction during school year, project to be let in Spring of next year.
 - Town of Central Connector – New project with \$643,000 GPATS Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) funding. Project was scoped with the Town of Central and surveys have been ordered.
- Guideshare Projects in Construction:
 - Roper Mountain Road/Roper Mountain Road Ext. – Both are GPATS Guideshare projects. Storm drainage, and sidewalk construction continuing on Roper Mountain Road. Roper Mountain Road Ext. bridge replacement construction is continuing along with the sidewalks.
- Bridge Projects:
 - S-75 Cherokee Road over US 29 – Project is non-guideshare bridge replacement in Anderson County. Bridge beams have been set and bridge deck installation is underway. New roundabout is now open for traffic. Earthwork for the new beams is beginning and earthwork and pipe installation is ongoing.
 - S-140 and S-250 – Both are non-guideshare bridge replacements in Pickens. Bridge is completed on S-140 and currently waiting for utility relocation to finish installation tied to the bridge. Deck work is underway on S-250.

Chairman Rice asked if anyone had questions. No questions were voiced.

GPATS TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP)– CITY OF GREER APPLICATION

Anna Stewart, GPATS Transportation Planner, addressed Committee members and explained the TA Program and GPATS' latest application. Ms. Stewart stated in January, staff released its annual Call for Projects for the FY2023 TAP Cycle and received one application.

A summary of the application is below, and the ranking form can be found in the agenda packet.

City of Greer – Wards Creek Trail Phase 1

- Requesting \$1,090,345.60
- Score: 16 out of 21 points
- Description: Construction of a 12' wide trail that is located along Wards Creek, connecting Ward's Creek Park to Biblebrook Drive. The trail will accommodate pedestrians and cyclists. The trail will total 0.45 miles.

Ms. Stewart explained GPATS currently has \$1,168,982 in TAP funds available for new projects and the Bike and Pedestrian Coordinating Committee discussed the application and recommends that GPATS award funding to City of Greer's project. The Study Team has also reviewed the application and recommended approval by consensus without objection.

Ms. Stewart made herself available for any questions.

Mayor Merritt asked for clarification on the trail being half a mile and costing over one million to complete and where the 20% can be found in that amount.

Ms. Stewart explained the total project cost is approximately 1.3 million and the City of Greer is responsible for 20% of the total.

Mr. Keith Brockington further explained the project is significantly larger than what the City applied for. He explained the requirement for a TAP application is 20% match and they are meeting that requirement along with being financially responsible for other sections of this trail.

Chairman Senator Rice asked about Right of Way acquisition pertaining to the trail.

Ms. Stewart and Mr. Brockington both agreed they were not aware of any.

Senator Karl Allen asked about the scoring of 16 out of 21 and why applicant did not get the full 21 points.

Ms. Stewart explained there is a question concerning project being located in an area of high need (greater than or equal to 20% of population within census tract in poverty) and the answer was no, meaning they did not get a point for that. She further explained it did

not disqualify them, it simply meant the score was lower than 21. Also, their match was not over 20% which would have given them an additional point.

Keith Brockington added there is also another point given if there are one or more jurisdictions partnering on the project and there was not. Mr. Brockington mentioned the completed "Criteria Ranking Form" is in the agenda packet if anyone would like to look over it.

Chairman Senator Rice asked if this score sheet or criteria was used for previous TAP applications.

Mr. Brockington responded this is the first time these particular criteria were used. He explained in working with SCDOT on the filing, this form has been approved by them and moving forward will be used for assessing TAP projects.

Chairman Senator Rice asked about the scores being the only determining factor for approving TAP applications.

Mr. Brockington replied no, the scores are not the only factor and approval is left up to the Policy Committee. Typically, GPATS weighs the merits of a project and takes into consideration what funding is available. Mr. Brockington also stated having only one application, there are no other projects to weigh against this one and the funding is available.

Someone asked about the possibility of the funds expiring if no TAP applications are approved.

Mr. Brockington replied that it is possible for funds to eventually lapse after a period of time; however, these funds will rollover if not awarded.

Chairman Rice asked if this project would be using all the funds GPATS has available.

Ms. Stewart replied no, there are still funds for other projects.

Commissioner Metcalf stated he has seen the area where the project is planned and believes it is a good location for this type of funding, particularly for safety reasons.

Mayor McLeer commented that Fountain Inn was able to receive two TAP grants (applying twice) for the same project when the funds were about to lapse and GPATS was able to make sure the funds were spent before they expired.

Chairman Rice asked for clarification on the source of the funding.

Mr. Brockington explained the large Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) get an annual allocation specifically for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and there is

approximately \$1.3 million (in GPATS' budget) dedicated annually for these specific projects.

MOTION: By Commissioner Metcalf, seconded by GTA Chairwoman Smith to approve City of Greer – Wards Creek Trail Phase I Application. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

GPATS TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FY2023-2028 AC#4

Keith Brockington, GPATS Transportation Manager, addressed members on the proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment AC#4 and advised the following changes:

- At the request of SCDOT, based on the Annual Obligations for GPATS, the Guideshare Carryover Balance from FY2022 is adjusted from the TIP-Estimated \$27,977,390.03 to an Actual balance of \$22,864,795.85.
- At the request of SCDOT, due to delays in the Feasibility Report process, shifts of the following projects:
 - US-29/Mills Ave. – 2023 to 2026
 - Grove Rd – 2023 to 2025
 - Laurens Rd – 2025 to 2027
 - Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway – 2023 to 2024
 - Greer to Taylors Greenway – 2025 to 2026
- Transit Apportionments for FY2023 of Section 5307, 5339, and 5310, and State Mass Transit funds for GTA/Greenlink and CATbus, based on formula.
- Award from SCDOT of Supplemental Funding for the Greenlink Maintenance Facility, \$8.6 million in Section 5311 (Rural) funding and 5339 (Capital) funding converted to 5307, and \$1.8 million of State Mass Transit Funding (SMTF) as match.
- Award from FTA to CATbus for Section 5339(c), “Low/No” Grant, \$3.93 million
- Addition of annual TAP Allocation to total \$1.326 million
- Award to the City of Greer of TAP funds, \$1,090,345.60

Mr. Brockington stated the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) has been advertised from April 24 through May 15 per the required twenty-one-day period. The Study Team has reviewed the changes to the TIP and recommends approval by consensus with no objections.

Mr. Brockington asked if there were any questions or comments.

Brandy Amidon, Mayor of Travelers Rest, asked for clarification regarding cost overruns and the possibility of this being the new norm.

Mr. Brockington responded that SCDOT is constantly refining their process of cost estimates and showing improvement at judging inflation issues. Mr. Brockington explained the feasibility process is intended to get a better idea on the bigger projects actual costs. Also, the projects currently ongoing were entered in before feasibility reports were updated at SCDOT.

Mr. Brockington explained Garlington Road is the next big project, that very well may see cost overruns, but is the first project that a feasibility report can be seen. For this reason, the cost estimate is expected to be more accurate ahead of allocating construction funds compared to projects in the past.

MOTION: By Councilor Kirven, seconded by Mayor McLeer to approve the Transportation Improvement Program Amendment FY2023-2028 AC #4 as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

GPATS TITLE VI PROGRAM UPDATES

Asangwua Ikein, GPATS Transit Planner, addressed members on the required updates to Title VI documents to come in compliance with current FTA standards. Mr. Ikein explained the annual update of the GPATS Title VI Plan 2023 involved updating demographics and making it publicly available. The updates are the most recent data on population demographics.

Mr. Ikein then explained the updating of the Limited English Proficiency (LEP) Plan 2023 involves identifying the location of people that find it difficult to speak or understand English. He also stated both of these plans were updated with demographics data per the latest US Census Data.

Mr. Ikein made himself available for questions.

Walker Smith, GTA Chairwoman, asked if the LEP Plan is used to identify locations where translations may be necessary.

Mr. Ikein replied yes and used the example of having a public meeting and the requirement of providing a translator or translated documents for those who have difficulties with English.

Ms. Smith then asked if there were ever an occasion when any translation other than Spanish was needed.

Mr. Ikein responded, thus far, Spanish has been the only translation requested.

Chairman Senator Rice asked if there were any more questions and none being brought up, the votes were taken one at a time.

MOTION: By Mayor McLeer, seconded by Mayor Shewmaker, to approve the updates to the Title VI Plan, keeping GPATS in compliance with Federal Standards. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

MOTION: By Mayor McLeer, seconded by Mayor Shewmaker, to approve the updates to the (LEP) Limited English Proficiency Plan 2023, which will keep GPATS in

compliance with Federal Standards. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

GPATS PERFORMANCE MEASURES UPDATE

Anna Stewart, GPATS Transportation Planner, addressed committee members with an Amendment to the GPATS Horizon 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) of GPATS Performance Measures as required by the FAST Act. Ms. Stewart explained an Amendment to the GPATS FY 2023-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Document to bridge TPMs from the LRTP into project selection and implementation. She also explained the SCDOT Transportation Asset Management Plan System Performance Report and SCDOT, along with FHWA, requested this item be amended into the LRTP as an Appendix.

The Performance Measure items being amended are:

- Infrastructure Condition
- System and Freight Reliability
- SCDOT STAMP System Performance Report 2022

Ms. Stewart made herself available for any questions.

Terry Merritt, Mayor of Mauldin, asked for a definition of NHS.

Mr. Brockington responded NHS is National Highway System. It is basically GPATS primary network.

Mayor Merritt then asked for clarification on “poor” conditions and would those be improving in the next few years.

Ms. Stewart explained most of the infrastructure condition targets have improved except maybe the non-interstate, outlying pavements.

Mr. Brockington added the targets are a rolling average and SCDOT is making great headway with pavement conditions, largely due to the gas tax funds.

MOTION: By Councilor Kirven, seconded by Mayor McLeer, to approve the Amendment to the GPATS Horizon 2040 LRTP as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

MOTION: By Councilor Kirven, seconded by Mayor McLeer, to approve the Amendment to the GPATS FY2023-2028 TIP Document as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

GPATS FY2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program

Keith Brockington addressed committee members with the FY2024 Financial Statement for the biennial FY2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program. Mr. Brockington explained this governs GPATS’ activities for the next two years. He advised members the draft document is on the website for easy viewing and hard copies can be provided if requested.

Mr. Brockington further explained the FY2025 is currently illustrative in the full document, in that we are projecting expected costs and carryovers from FY2024.

Councilor Kirven asked how special studies are nominated and granted funds.

Mr. Brockington explained GPATS advertised and announced a call for projects in February of this year for any jurisdiction within GPATS boundaries and did not receive any applications. He further explained the carryover funds will not go to waste as there are other needs being discussed. The US Highway 29 (Wade Hampton Boulevard) project is substantial and will need studies done, for example. Mr. Brockington reminded members these funds are to be used for planning and are not available for construction or engineering. Also, any funds still available in January 2023, will be made accessible for another call for projects.

Mr. Brockington stated that GPATS has been making carryover balances available for jurisdictions for their studies since around 2006 and have done over twenty-five. It has helped many jurisdictions better understand their transportation needs.

MOTION: By Mayor McLeer, seconded by Councilor Kirven to approve the FY2024 Unified Planning Work Program Financial Statement as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

NEW BUSINESS

2020 Census Changes to GPATS

Keith Brockington addressed committee members with an update on census changes pertaining to GPATS boundaries. Mr. Brockington stated discussions with SCDOT, Spartanburg Area Transportation Study (SPATS), and Anderson Area Transportation Study (ANATS) are ongoing. He explained SPATS would prefer the boundary to be the county line but that has not yet been determined. He also mentioned that Clemson is currently within GPATS boundary but it is possible they will move into the Anderson (ANATS) boundary.

Mr. Brockington gave a tentative timeline to present a draft of the boundaries to show the Study team in July with the hope of presenting it to the Policy Committee members in the August meeting.

Chairman Senator Rice inquired about any potential disadvantages in funding with the new boundaries.

Mr. Brockington responded the SCDOT will need drafts of boundary lines before they can speculate on funding. There is a hope of using 2020 census population numbers versus 2010 in terms of funding. Mr. Brockington stated, in his opinion, the greatest benefit to Clemson for moving to ANATS is they would no longer compete with Greenville in terms of projects. In other words, Clemson would have a better chance of receiving funds if they were a part of the ANATS Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). However, Anderson is a smaller population so their funding amounts are smaller.

Mr. Brockington assured members GPATS staff will keep the Study Team and Policy Committee involved and up-to-date as events warrant.

GPATS 101 Training Session

Mr. Brockington stated the GPATS 101 training session is primarily for new members but also good for those who may need a refresher. GPATS still plans to schedule the session very soon.

County Square Meeting Location Change

Mr. Brockington stated the new county building is almost ready and employees expect to be moving into the new offices soon. He assured members as soon as the location for the next meeting is known all members will be updated.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Without objection Chairman Senator Rice adjourned the meeting at 10:55 a.m.

Cleo Hill

Submitted by Recording Secretary