

MINUTES
GPATS POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
May 18, 2026
County Square – Council Chambers
10:00 a.m.

In-person and remote participation by Committee members

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice-Chairman Mayor McLeer, Senator Rice, Councilor Bradley, Councilor Davis, Councilor Saitta, Councilor Seman, Mayor Amidon, Mayor Danner, Mayor Merritt, Mayor Talbert, GTA Chair Sean Rusnak, and Keith Brockington.

OTHERS PRESENT: A. Booth, J. Chandler, S. Davis, B. DeRoos, E. Dillon, L. Estep, W. Flake, M. Frixen, T. Galloway, H. Gamble, B. Groel, M. Groves, C. Hill, V. Holmes, M. Hudson-Flege, S. Jackson-Amell, S. Jordan, B. Klauk, C. Link, H. Lollis, B. Mattox, K. Moreland, B. Olson, T. Oswald, C. Owens, A. Patel, J. Smith, R. Tolson, R. Wallace and B. Wilson.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Vice-Chairman Mayor G.P. McLeer called the meeting to order at 10:18 a.m. and asked if anyone had objections to Terry Merritt, Mayor of Mauldin, acting as Chairman for this meeting. Vice-Chairman McLeer was participating via Zoom, and interruptions or disconnections were possible.

No objections were voiced, and Mayor Merritt picked up the gavel.

In the absence of a quorum, acting Chairman Merritt moved down the agenda to the Public Comment section.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Matthew Hudson-Flege, Upstate Greenways and Trails Alliance (UGATA) Executive Director, addressed the Committee saying he is opposed to the GPATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FY2025-2034 Amendment AC#9. Mr. Hudson-Flege said this proposed amendment calls for removing funds for the Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway project, along with five other projects in the GPATS region, in order to make up for a shortfall of funds due to increased costs for another project. Mr. Hudson-Flege reiterated that he wishes to speak out strongly against this amendment because the Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway is a critical project that would tie thousands of residents in the Mauldin area to the broader Swamp Rabbit Trail network. Mr. Hudson-Flege stated this project will also create connections to another flagship project that just will not have the same impact without the Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway. He said the City of Mauldin, City of Greenville, County of Greenville, and others elected to place this project on the Guideshare funding list and he and UGATA want to see it move forward. Also, in terms of policy, the Horizon2040 Long-Range Transportation Plan and the Horizon2045 update, call for a designated 10% of Guideshare funds to go towards bike and pedestrian projects. The Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway project helps fulfill that and if the funding is eliminated, then the designated 10% will not be reached. Mr. Hudson-Flege asked that before approving the TIP Amendment when a project is over budget, all other forms of funding be researched before removing funding for projects already approved for placement in the TIP.

Mr. Hudson-Flege ended with stating that he and UGATA are always happy to work with the Study Team and Policy Committee hand in hand to identify solutions and he thanked the Committee for their attention and time.

SCDOT PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Megan Groves, Lead Program Manager with SCDOT, addressed Committee members with an update on projects summarized below.

- Upcoming projects were as follows:
 - Garlington Road – Negotiations paused until further funding discussions take place.
 - Pelham Road & Haywood Road intersection and Pleasantburg Drive & Rutherford Road intersection – Project scope to be reviewed with City of Greenville and awaiting future funding discussions. These two intersections will be packaged together.
 - Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway – Project was approved in STIP in December 2025. Working with City of Mauldin on scope while awaiting future funding discussions.
 - East Butler Road – Utility relocations are ongoing-Duke Energy has two crews working on the relocations. Plans are to let this project in August 2026. Once contractor has been chosen, SCDOT plans on updating the public on this project.
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief – Right of Way acquisition is underway and about 96% complete. Utility and railroad coordination are the current critical path. Looking at phasing construction contract for clearing and grubbing package. Funding discussions are currently ongoing.
 - SC-183 Corridor Improvements – Preliminary design is underway. Awaiting future funding discussions.
 - SC-183 & Jameson Road intersection – Right of Way negotiations are ongoing. Final design and signal plans are progressing. Temporary all way stop has been implemented at the intersection.
 - Town of Central Connector – Contract awarded to Southern Concrete & Construction, Inc. with a completion date of November 2026.
 - Multi-use trail along Bryson Drive and Bryson Heights Drive (UGATA) – Conceptual plans developed and will continue coordination with UGATA. Preliminary design is underway. Design Field Review to take place in May.
 - Church Street Bridge – Currently in final stage of construction. Expected to re-open in mid-June.
 - S-250 Hester Store Road over Machine Creek – Contract awarded to Kemp Sigmon Construction Co. Inc. Bridge is to be closed May 26 to remove old bridge and begin construction on the new bridge. Estimated completion date is May 2027.
 - S-149 West Faris Road over Brushy Creek – Currently delayed until January 2027.
 - S-277 Lay Bridge Road over Twelve Mile Creek (Closed Bridge) – Right of way plans under development with obligations in spring 2026 and construction anticipated in the spring of 2027.
 - US-276 over North Saluda River – Scope negotiations are completed and construction anticipated in FY2028.
 - S-507 Brooks Avenue over Langston Creek (Closed Bridge) – Right of way acquisitions ongoing and final plans have been reviewed and approved. This is a proposed re-alignment and construction is anticipated in FY2027.

- Design Build Bridge Package 19:
 - S-40 Pace Bridge Road over South Saluda River
 - S-102 Keeler Mill Road over Armstrong Creek
 - S-310 Crestwood Drive over tributary to Richland Creek
 - S-94 Hammett Bridge Road over tributary to Richland Creek
 - S-40 Pace Bridge Road over Saluda Overflow
 - S-26 Pace Bridge Road over tributary to Saluda River

All six bridges in package awarded to E.S. Wagner Company, LLC. Plan development underway with construction underway for Pace Bridge Road (S-40/S-26) with completion of December 2026.

- Design Build Bridge Package 16:
 - SC-183 over Gregory Creek
 - SC-183 over Twelve Mile Creek
 - SC-124 over George’s Creek
 - SC-123 over George’s Creek

All four bridges are replacements and contract awarded to Palmetto Infrastructure, Inc. The two SC-183 bridges were opened to traffic in November 2025. SC-123 Bridge shifted traffic in January 2026. Completion is expected in fall 2026.

- Design Build Emergency Bridge Packages 30 and 31:
 - Dill Road over Middle Tyger River
 - Hudson Street over Reedy River
 - West Washington over Reedy River

All three projects are now complete.

- Safety Improvements:
 - Gap Creek Road & Gary Armstrong Intersection Improvements – Project is complete.
 - US-25 & US-25 Connector Intersection Improvements – Installation of a signalized Continuous Green T intersection to control southbound and eastbound approaches with an estimated completion date in August 2026.

- Corridor Safety Improvement Projects:
 - US 29 Wade Hampton Boulevard – Safety improvements include sidewalks. Project awarded to Palmetto Corp. of Conway. Contractor began work in January 2026 and construction start date has been delayed to August 2026.
 - SC-183 Cedar Lane Road/Pete Hollis Boulevard – safety improvements including street lighting. Also awarded to Palmetto Corp. of Conway. Expected to begin work in August 2026.

- Vulnerable Road Users (Section Corridor Improvements):
 - River Street/Richardson Street – Draft traffic reports and conceptual plans in development, further coordination with City of Greenville to come. Expected let date is early 2027.
 - US-29 Wade Hampton Boulevard – Consultant is developing final plans and wrapping up utility coordination.

- US-276 Poinsett Highway – Draft traffic reports and conceptual plans in development. City of Greenville reviewing concepts. Schedule could move due to the need to acquire additional Right of Way.

Ms. Groves made herself available for questions.

Mayor Brandy Amidon, City of Travelers Rest, asked where the US-276 Poinsett Highway safety improvements project begins.

Ben DeRoos, SCDOT Assistant Program Manager, explained it starts where SC-183 or Pete Hollis Boulevard splits off or near Lewis Barbecue restaurant.

Mayor Amidon asked what the SC-183 project is addressing.

Ms. Groves answered safety and congestion.

With no other questions, and still lacking a quorum, Acting Chairman, Mayor Merritt moved on to GPATS Horizon 2050 LRTP Update.

GPATS HORIZON 2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) UPDATE

Ms. Groel began by explaining that the Long-Range Transportation Plan includes a fiscally constrained, prioritized list of projects to be completed over the next 25 years. Ms. Groel stated the GPATS Guiding Statements are Culture and Environment, Economic Vitality, Growth and Development, Mobility and Accessibility, Safety and Security, and System Preservation and Efficiency.

Ms. Groel said the Kick-off began in February of this year, and working with GPATS staff, the branding and web portal were designed. The Public Engagement Plan includes two rounds. The first round has already begun with evening meetings in Greer, Greenville, Travelers Rest, Simpsonville, Easley, and Powdersville. The second round will be held in July. Ms. Groel explained that the community outreach is an integral part of the process. Some of the numbers as of today include:

- 31 In-Person participants
- 28 Virtual participants
- 862 Web Portal Views
- 516 Web Portal Users
- 45 Survey responses as of May 14
- 41 Comments on the interactive map as of May 17

Ms. Groel stated that the existing conditions assessment is currently under review. Ms. Groel presented a comprehensive analysis of the GPATS region's population, demographics, transportation patterns, and infrastructure needs, including data on household incomes, education levels, commuting habits, and collision statistics. She also mentioned ongoing coordination with SPATS on shared transportation projects.

Ms. Groel displayed a Level of Service map for 2022, stating that, under existing conditions, many roadways are approaching failing conditions, if not already in failing condition. She then showed a Level of Service map for 2050 for comparison. She explained that if existing conditions are maintained, the

volume-to-capacity ratios are expected to increase significantly, leading to even more roads becoming congested. The level of service will be even worse (in 2050) than it is today. Ms. Groel said this is another way of identifying projects that will help reduce the number of failing roadways.

Ms. Groel concluded her presentation with the next steps in the Horizon 2050 LRTP. This week, GPATS will hold the last three public information meetings of round one. Then, continue collecting data and comments from the public, incorporate the Regional Mobility Program and the existing Congestion Management Process, hold round two of the public involvement processes, draft the LRTP Document, present it to the GPATS Study Team and Policy Committee, and, once approved (hopefully in October), the final step is the production and publication of the Horizon2050 LRTP Document.

Ms. Groel made herself available for questions.

Mayor Rick Danner, City of Greer, asked if GPATS is in communication with SPATS regarding any shared projects.

Keith Brockington, GPATS Transportation Manager, replied, yes, GPATS is working with SPATS, and SPATS is also doing their LRTP in tandem with GPATS. We handed out flyers during our public meetings for SPATS and GPATS, and they are doing the same. Mr. Brockington said we already have some projects that we are both working on together, such as Reidville Road.

Acting Chairman Merritt asked if there were any other questions. When no one spoke, he reminded everyone in attendance that not reaching a quorum today meant they could not vote on any of the action items.

Mr. Brockington added, due to numerous items requiring a vote, GPATS will place another 21-day advertisement and send notices to all Policy Committee members of a called meeting to take a vote on the critical items requiring passage. Mr. Brockington said GPATS will coordinate with the Chairman and other members to select a date and time for that meeting.

Mr. Brockington reiterated that the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) project is still under discussion with SCDOT concerning how funding can move forward. They (SCDOT) believe other options can lead to a solution that will not delay other projects. For now, WRCR discussions or presentations to the GPATS Policy Committee will be postponed until August, giving SCDOT time to develop other funding solutions.

Senator Rex Rice asked about the original project cost of the WRCR improvement.

Mr. Brockington answered that the original projected cost was approximately \$123 million and that it is now expected to be around \$277 million.

Senator Rice stated projects need to be reviewed and studied a little more in-depth from now on to avoid surprises on massive increases. Senator Rice pointed out that the ROW for the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief project was around \$43 million, but it is now closer to \$75 million, which is why GPATS members need to look more closely at projects and their costs. He said we have to do a better job at projecting these costs.

Mr. Brockington agreed.

Mr. Brockington encouraged all to spread the word on the Long-Range Transportation Plan and to let others know to visit gpats.org, use the QR code, go to Horizon2050.com portal, share the flyers, and help get others involved.

Hearing no other comments or questions, Acting Chairman Merritt thanked everyone for coming and reiterated the need to share LRTP information to encourage participation.

ADJOURNMENT:

Without objection, Acting Chairman Merritt adjourned the meeting at 11:14 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Recording Secretary

Cleo A. Hill