

MINUTES
GPATS STUDY TEAM COMMITTEE
July 15, 2024
County Square – Council Chambers
10:00 a.m.

In person and remote participation by Study Team members

MEMBERS PRESENT: Amy Blinson, Keith Brockington, Trey Brown, Tee Coker, Heshia Gamble, Shannon Herman, Valerie Holmes, Ed Hunt, Asangwua Ikein, Skip Limbaker, Casey Lucas, Ben Olson, Anna Stewart, and Jim Walden.

OTHERS PRESENT: D. Beatty, S. Bharadwaj, P. Butler, D. Cooper, E. Dillon, B. Groel, C. Hill, S. Jackson-Amell, J. Johns, C. Jones, C. Jordan, E. Littleton, S. Markowitz, K. Odenthal, K. Schuenemeyer, and R. Tolson.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Keith Brockington welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m.

GPATS PRODUCT STATUS UPDATE

Casey Lucas, Program Manager with the SCDOT, addressed members with a status update on projects within the GPATS area.

- Projects in construction were as follows:
 - Roper Mountain Road and Roper Mountain Road Extension (RMRE) - Crews continue to work on Phase II of the new bridge construction over Rocky Creek. Anticipated completion by end of this month.
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief – Right of Way acquisition is underway.
 - S-107 Butler Road – Right of Way acquisition is also underway.
 - Garlington Road – In Planning phase.
 - SC-183 & Jameson Road intersection – Small purchase contract is underway and moving forward with conceptual intersection improvements. It is recommended to move forward with a signalized intersection. Pickens County side of the SC-183 widening project is still yet to be determined.
 - Pelham Road & Haywood Road Intersection improvements – Small purchase contract delivered the Final Report. It is recommended to move forward with a Continuous Flow intersection with a total estimated cost of \$9 million. RK & K was available to answer questions regarding the analysis of the intersection improvement recommendation.

Heshia Gamble, Greenville County Assistant Administrator for Engineering and Public Works, asked how a continuous flow intersection works.

Shreyas Bharadwaj, Project Manager with RK&K, showed an example on screen while explaining vehicles attempting to turn across opposing direction of traffic cross before they enter the intersection. He explained traffic headed east, traffic headed west, and left turn traffic can all move simultaneously and this flow is more feasible, efficient and safer than left turn at the intersection.

Ms. Gamble asked if there are any continuous flow intersections in operation elsewhere in the state.

Mr. Bharadwaj replied he doesn't believe any are in operation but there are some in planning phases in South Carolina. He added North Carolina has one, Louisiana has one, and Florida has plenty.

Ms. Lucas continued with the updates:

- Pleasantburg Drive & Rutherford Road Intersection improvements – Small purchase contract delivered the Final Report. Neel-Scheffer analyzed intersection and recommended partial median U-turn intersection with estimated total cost of \$5 million. Neel-Scheffer was available for any questions.
- SC 183 Corridor Improvement – Greenville County portion of the corridor includes widening from White Horse Road to Alex Drive/Saluda View Drive. Project has been advertised to consultants and proposals are due July 18, 2024.

- TA Programs were as follows:
 - Woodside Streetscape – Sidewalks completed, and lighting to be installed this week.
 - Woodside Park Connector – Construction has begun and removal of the old footpath started. The pedestrian bridge is to start within the next two weeks.
 - Riverside Middle School Sidewalk – Awarded in March 2024 letting to Southern Concrete & Construction, Inc. and SCDOT will apply Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funds as needed to complete project.
 - Town of Central Connector – Preliminary design is underway.

- Federal Earmark project:
 - West Georgia Road – Guideshare funds added to construction phase, construction expected to begin in December.

- Non-Guideshare project:
 - SC 183 Corridor Improvement – Pickens County portion of the corridor. Project has been advertised to consultants and proposals are due July 18, 2024.

- SCDOT Bridges updates included:
 - S-154 over Huff Creek – In construction with an estimated completion date of December 2024.
 - US-29 Church Street - Project on track to be let next month. The Pre-Bid meeting with contractors is being held July 25.
 - S-125 over Saluda River – Proposed let date moved to 2032.
 - S-384 over Brushy Creek – Let date moved to December 2032 and plans are in QA review.
 - S-250 over Machine Creek – Right of Way obligation moved to August 2024.
 - S-277 over Twelve Mile Creek – Contract has been negotiated and is currently being routed for signatures.

Ms. Lucas explained the last page of the update show SCDOT, non-guideshare bridges within GPATS boundaries and are provided for information purposes.

Ms. Lucas made herself available for any questions.

GPATS FTA Section 5310 Projects

Asangwua Ikein, GPATS Transit Planner/Grants Manager, updated members on the two projects. Mr. Ikein explained the Transit Coordinated Committee (TCC) members are still sending in their evaluation so scores are subject to change and the two applications were summarized as:

- 1) Senior Solutions scored an average 44.7/100 in their TCC evaluation.
 - a. Local Match \$171,200
 - b. Federal Match \$297,800
 - c. Total application \$469,000

- 2) Able SC scored ___/100 in their TCC evaluation.
 - a. Local Match \$71,169.50
 - b. Federal Match \$71,169.50
 - c. Total application \$142,339

Currently there is \$450,798 available for federal match. Both applications combined total \$368,969.50, which is less than the available federal funding. Mr. Ikein explained if a score of 70/100 is not obtained, the application will be rejected and it appears that both projects are below that.

Mr. Brockington asked if any funds are at risk of lapsing.

Mr. Ikein replied yes, there is approximately \$71,000 at risk of lapsing. He explained if no applicants receive the funds during this cycle, GPATS has a policy in place so the money will be automatically be rewarded to Greenlink/GTA.

Tee Coker, Greenville County Assistant Administrator for Community Planning and Development, asked if there is a way to work with applicants to improve their scores.

Mr. Ikein replied before an applicant applies, they are informed if they have any questions or require assistance with the application, GPATS is available to help in any way needed. An example of that is Able SC did reach out with questions and guidance was provided.

Mr. Brockington added whenever federal funds are involved, there has to be an evaluation and recommendation based on the scores that are received and when there is a change in the project, there is a change in the scores and a re-evaluation is necessary.

Mr. Ikein stated the TCC has recommended rejection of Senior Solutions' application due to the score being well below the minimum of 70/100. He added the TCC has not gotten in all the scores for Able SC but it appears they, too, are below the 70/100.

Mr. Brockington stated GPATS Study Team needs to make a recommendation based on the scores today and the TCC recommendations which at this point is rejection of both applications.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval, or any objections, from the members to recommend denial of both applications for FTA Section 5310 funds to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

Mr. Brockington explained an amendment to GPATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) financial statement will be needed if the Policy Committee approves either application or if they vote to deny the applications an amendment will be needed to show the \$71,000 going to Greenlink/GTA.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval, or any objections, from the members to recommend an Amendment to GPATS FY2025-2034 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) financial statement, as discussed, to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), FY2024 Cycle - Round Two

Anna Stewart, GPATS Transportation Planner, updated members on the one application received from the second Call for Projects. A summary of the application is shown below:

City of Greenville – Lowndes Hill Road Sidewalk

- Requesting \$1,358,667
- Local Match: 50%
- Score: 12.25 out of 21 points
- Description: 5100’ of new sidewalk along Overbrook Road from East North Street to Lowndes Hill Road, and on Lowndes Hill Road from Overbrook Road to Oakland Drive.

Ms. Stewart stated the Bike and Pedestrian Coordinating Committee (BPCC) reviewed the application and the average score was 12.25. One member of the BPCC scored the project a zero because of the initial lack of cost estimate and other design considerations. Once the City did provide a cost estimate, that was sent out to the BPCC members but the member who scored the project a zero never got back with us to update their score. Ms. Stewart read their final comment which was “I support funding this project but recommend the city include in their design borderlines on the crosswalks for greater visibility and green paint between the crosswalk ladder bars in order to encourage bicycles to use the sidewalk for their own safety”.

Ms. Stewart made herself available for questions.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval, or any objections, from the members to recommend TAP funding be awarded to City of Greenville for the Lowndes Hill Road Sidewalk, as presented, to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

Mr. Brockington noted a TIP amendment would be needed if the Policy Committee votes to approve the TAP award just discussed.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval, or any objections, from the members to recommend an Amendment to GPATS FY2025-2034 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) financial statement, adding the TAP award, to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

Garlington Road Project Feasibility Report

Mr. Brockington reminded members of a new policy for SCDOT to perform Feasibility Reports on potentially large projects that are intended to perform PE activities up to 30% design so Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Councils of Government (COGs) will have a better understanding of the scope and costs of a project before the remainder of preliminary engineering, Right-of-way, and

Construction funding is programmed. He added the purpose of the feasibility report is to give the Study Team and Policy Committee members a better idea of what the larger projects are going to do, what they will look like, and their cost. This will give a more accurate cost and scope prior to programming the rest of the funding.

Mr. Brockington explained the Garlington Road Project, from Woodruff Road to Pelham Road, is GPATS' first Feasibility Report project and SCDOT contracted with Mead & Hunt to perform it. The final study can be found on GPATS' home page at www.gpats.org. He then introduced Ms. Jessica Johns, Project Manager, with Mead & Hunt.

Ms. Jessica Johns, Project Manager with Mead & Hunt, presented members with the Garlington Road Feasibility Study. Ms. Johns began her presentation explaining the purpose and need of this project is to improve operational efficiency, safety at intersections, and access management along Garlington Road. Ms. Johns said this study will help determine the most feasible and reasonable alternative to meet the purpose and need of the project and estimate the project limits, impacts, and costs to improve traffic flow and operational movements along Garlington Road from Woodruff Road to Pelham Road. Ms. Johns added the first step is to form a Private Development Team (PDT) to steer the process and identify the goals.

Ms. Johns stated the scope and goals for this project were to perform a traffic study to address deficiencies via alternative analysis, provide pedestrian and bicycle accommodations, evaluate options for increased non-motorized usage and connectivity, and to minimize right-of-way acquisitions. She added the goals of the project were to maintain the roadway as a collector, address all non-motorized functionality, address access management, involve scaled improvements, and reduce congestions and access-related crashes.

Ms. Johns continued the presentation explaining conceptual design alternatives, roadway safety improvements and preferred alternatives. After discussing numerous aspects of the study, Ms. Johns asked if anyone had any questions.

Tee Coker, Greenville County Assistant Administrator for Community Planning and Development, asked what would happen with the pedestrian infrastructure under I-385.

Ms. Johns replied it is currently a sidewalk and due to the railroad, there just isn't enough room for a Shared Use Path.

Mr. Brockington added one of the constraints of getting under I-385 is the railroad and that the constraints are much less, or non-existent, when on GE (General Electric) property. Mr. Brockington added Ty Houck, Greenville County Manager of Greenways, has been part of these conversations and he has contacts at GE who may be open to discussions of bringing the path across the railroad on GE property and then along the backside of GE property and to work the trail to connect with where the Woodruff Road Parallel will meet with Woodruff Road at Smith Hines Road.

Mr. Brockington reiterated a final version of this study will be posted on www.gpats.org.

Old Business

Keith Brockington reminded everyone the September Study Team Meeting has been moved to September 16th due to many members being out of state for the Annual AMPO Conference.

Mr. Brockington stated the GPATS Congestion Management Process is wrapping up and will be presented at the next Study Team Meeting.

Mr. Brockington said the process of updating GPATS Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will soon be in the works and he asked that all in attendance be thinking about what they want their jurisdiction to look like from a transportation standpoint and any projects that are not on the list and they want them on the list, now is the time to speak up as we move into the process. He added this is where GPATS develops all of our policies, programs, and projects.


Jim Walden, SCDOT Regional Planning Manager, thanked GPATS for sharing the Momentum 2050 Survey and encouraged all those in attendance to take the survey and pass it along to others who may be interested. He stated the survey is the statewide multi-modal transportation plan and will influence how SCDOT will prioritize their funding for the next twenty years.

Mr. Brockington added if anyone needs the link to that survey, they can email GPATS and we will be happy to provide the link.

Mr. Brockington asked if any members had any new business or updates they wanted to share. No one voiced any updates or comments.

ADJOURN

Without objection, Mr. Brockington adjourned the meeting at 10:54 a.m.



Submitted by Recording Secretary
Cleo A. Hill