

MINUTES
GPATS POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
August 10, 2026

County Square – Council Chambers

10:00 a.m.

In-person and remote participation by Committee members

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Senator Turner, Vice-Chairman Mayor McLeer, Senator Allen, Senator Elliott, Senator Rice, Representative Beach, Representative Morgan, Councilor Davis, Councilor Saitta, Councilor Seman, Commissioner Christopher, Mayor Amidon, Mayor Danner, Mayor Merritt, Mayor White, GTA Chair Sean Rusnak, and Keith Brockington.

OTHERS PRESENT: A. Booth, P. Butler, D. Carlile, J. Chandler, S. Davis, W. Flake, T. Galloway, H. Gamble, B. Groel, M. Groves, J. Hanna, C. Hill, V. Holmes, M. Hudson-Flege, A. Ikein, S. Jackson-Amell, B. Klauk, C. Link, H. Lollis, B. Mattox, K. Moreland, B. Olson, T. Oswald, A. Patel, M. Pleasant, L. Quattlebaum, R. Tolson, M. Walker, and N. Wright.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Chairman Ross Turner called the meeting to order at 10:09 a.m. and thanked everyone for their attendance. In the absence of a quorum, Chairman Turner moved down the agenda to the Public Comment section.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Marlene Walker addressed the committee, saying she was speaking today as a private citizen and that, since moving here in 1989, she has watched the population double and believes it will double again before the projects (that are planned now) are even finished. Ms. Walker stressed that the population will only continue to grow and that the infrastructure developed is a good foundation, but it is not connected. Ms. Walker emphasized the need for greater interconnectivity among transportation projects, safer bike infrastructure, and more funding mechanisms such as taxes to finance infrastructure improvements. She said there are too many incomplete projects scattered across the area. Ms. Walker stated that Charlotte, Greenville, Anderson, and Spartanburg will one day be one large urban area, and the need for better connectivity and safer, more connected bike paths is crucial. She stressed the need for multi-use paths and more ways to get from point A to point B without a car.

On the draft, unranked project list (regarding GPATS' Long-Range Transportation Plan), Ms. Walker mentioned that the Doodle Trail Extension, Laurens Road Corridor, and Roper Mountain Corridor projects should be combined into a single project. She said traffic improvements need the correct sidewalks and safety measures, and should all be considered together. Ms. Walker suggested that before a development is approved, there should be infrastructure in place to handle that development ahead of any construction. She reiterated the need for a "wheel tax," a "commuter tax," or a new construction tax to help fund projects.

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 – Feasibility Report complete. Negotiations are on hold pending funding discussions. Estimated costs are PE \$2.5 million, ROW \$2.8 million, and CON \$49 million.
 - Pelham Road & Haywood Road Intersection Improvement – Project pending due to funding discussions. Further discussions needed on revised scope. Estimated costs are PE \$1 million, ROW \$4 million, and CON \$4.5 million.
 - Pleasantburg Drive & Rutherford Road Intersection Improvement – Project pending due to funding discussions. Further discussions needed on revised scope. Estimated costs are PE \$500,000, ROW \$700,000, and CON \$3.3 million.
 - Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway – Shared Use Path in Mauldin from Innovation Drive to Butler Road currently in PE. Project pending due to funding discussions. Estimated costs are PE \$1 million, ROW \$5 million, and CON \$6 million.
 - East Butler Road – Project letting September 9, 2026. Public meeting to be held once construction contract is awarded. Estimated costs are PE \$3.9 million, ROW \$13.37 million, and CON \$46.26 million.
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief – Funding discussions are on-going. Construction anticipated Spring 2027 pending funding. Estimated Costs: PE \$8 million, ROW \$75 million, and CON \$197 million.
 - SC-183 Corridor Improvements – Two separate projects: one is Greenville County side and the other is Pickens County side and they are on independent timelines. Greenville side is pending due to funding discussions and Estimated costs are PE \$3.11 million, ROW \$14.5 million, and CON \$57.06 million. Pickens side proposed reduced scope due to funding, would require SC Transportation Infrastructure Bank (SCTIB) approval. Estimated costs are PE \$9.43 million, ROW \$36.25 million, and CON \$179.62 million.
 - SC-183 & Jameson Road intersection – Letting in November 2026. Moving forward with intersection only with signal. Estimated costs are PE \$400,000, ROW \$610,000, and CON \$2.7 million.
 - Bryson Drive Multi-Use Trail (UGATA) – Preliminary Design underway. Construction anticipated FY2027. \$1,127,441 GPATS TAP funding.
 - Town of Central Connector (Green Crescent Trail) – Preconstruction meeting with contractor held on May 12 and Construction anticipated August 2026. \$643,000 GPATS TAP funding.
 - Church Street Bridge – Bridge Rehab and Enhancements. Project complete. Contractor finished installing stairway, drain pipe, and finished painting barrier wall.
 - S-250 Hester Store Road over Machine Creek – Contract awarded to Kemp Sigmon Construction Company. Completion date is May 2027. Existing temporary steel bridge has been disassembled.
 - S-149 West Faris Road over Brushy Creek – Final plans are complete and Right of Way obligated in June 2025. Construction anticipated early Spring 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 fall of 2027.
 - US-276 over North Saluda River – Off-Alignment Bridge Replacement with construction anticipated in FY2029. Project kick-off meeting held in June and preliminary design is underway.
 - S-507 Brooks Avenue over Langston Creek (Closed Bridge) – Proposed realignment with construction letting in September 2026. Mandatory pre-bid to be held August 18, 2026.

- Design Build Closed/Load Restricted Bridges Package 19:
 - Pace Bridge Road over tributary to Saluda River
 - Pace Bridge Road over South Saluda River
 - Pace Bridge Road over Saluda Overflow
 - Hammett Bridge Road over tributary to Enoree River
 - Keeler Mill Road over Armstrong Creek
 - Crestwood Drive over tributary to Richland Creek

Pace Bridge Road bridges are in construction phase. Contract for all was awarded to E.S. Wagner Company, LLC and expected completion is spring 2028.
- Design Build Closed/Load Restricted Bridges 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 SC-183 bridges and the SC-124 bridge is complete. US-123 southbound expected to be completed in April 2027.
- Corridor Safety Improvement Projects:
 - US 29 Wade Hampton Boulevard – Safety improvements include sidewalks. Project award to Palmetto Corp. of Conway. Contractor began work in January 2026 with estimated completion date in July 2027.
 - SC-183 Cedar Lane Road/Pete Hollis Boulevard – safety improvements including street lighting. Also awarded to Palmetto Corp. of Conway. Work on new signal pole foundations have begun. Expected completion date is August 2026 (Pending additional time for change order).
- Vulnerable Road Users (Section Corridor Improvements):
 - River Street/Richardson Street – Proposed safety improvements to include signing and pavement markings, two-way cycle track, high visibility crosswalks, and ADA improvements.
 - US-29 Wade Hampton Boulevard – Proposed safety improvements to include pedestrian ramps and crosswalks, leading pedestrian intervals, installation of new sidewalks, and traffic signal upgrades. Expected let date is November 2026.
 - US-276 Poinsett Highway – Proposed safety improvements to include signing and pavement markings, leading pedestrian intervals, high visibility crosswalks, and traffic signal upgrades. Schedule could move due to acquiring additional ROW.

Ms. Groves made herself available for questions.

Mayor Rick Danner, City of Greer, asked how many projects were ready for construction among those that were just updated.

Keith Brockington, GPATS' Transportation Manager, replied that Butler Road and Woodruff Road Congestion Relief were the two projects ready to begin construction.

Mayor Danner asked for more details on the status of the Woodruff Road project.

Mr. Brockington explained that he has planned a detailed presentation for Woodruff Road today when the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is discussed (a little further on down the agenda).

Ms. Groves mentioned the phasing for the Clearing and Grubbing portion of the construction and Mr. Brockington agreed that will be a part of the presentation.

GPATS HORIZON2050 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) UPDATE

Ms. Brennan Groel, Transportation Planner with HDR, addressed members on the progress of the LRTP and summarized the second round of public engagement meetings. Ms. Groel explained during Round Two of the public information meetings, there were six in-person meetings and one virtual meeting, resulting in 125 in-person attendees, 104 virtual participants, and 1,026 web portal users. Ms. Groel said there were 40 attendees at the Stakeholder meeting, 601 responses on the statistically valid survey, and 132 comments on the interactive maps as of August 10, 2026.

Ms. Groel presented a draft list of 150 projects that are currently unranked and requested feedback on that list. The projects came from jurisdictional and public input received to date, existing regional plans, congestion and safety analyses, GPATS' Congestion Management Process (CMP), and SCDOT's Regional Mobility Program (RMP). The list includes 67 corridor projects, 43 intersection projects, eight signal projects, and 32 bike and pedestrian projects.

Ms. Groel explained the prioritization process that is rooted in performance-based planning and in draft weighting based on feedback to date. Ms. Groel said the steps to prioritization are:

- 1) GPATS collects public input on study area needs.
- 2) Project list is created.
- 3) Project list is compared and scored against the criteria.
- 4) Projects are ranked based on weighted scores.
- 5) Fiscal constraints are added to the list.
- 6) Projects are moved to the TIP for implementation.

Ms. Groel added that the goals and objectives include seven pertinent guiding statements: Culture & Environment, Growth & Development, Safety & Security, Economic Value, Mobility & Accessibility, Systems Preservation & Efficiency, and Public Input Emphasis. These goals have different weights such as Growth & Development at 15%, and Safety & Security at 25%.

Ms. Groel said prioritization reflects how balanced, or aligned, a project is across LRTP goals. She added that it does not reflect critical needs in one area (operations, safety, etc.), nor does it reflect project readiness or funding capacity. She encouraged everyone to attend the online meeting (available on the Horizon 2050 web portal) and visit the interactive map, which is available until August 15.

Ms. Groel explained that the next steps include finalizing and ranking the project list, preparing it for review, and distributing it to the GPATS Study Team, Policy Committee, and the GPATS mailing list before the October 12, 2026 GPATS Policy Committee meeting.

Ms. Groel made herself available for questions.

APPROVAL OF THE JUNE 15, 2026 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Having reached a quorum, Chairman Turner asked if anyone had any amendments to the minutes. None were voiced.

MOTION: By Mayor Merritt, seconded by Mayor McLeer, to approve the June 15, 2026 minutes as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

GPATS NEW MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU) WITH GTA

Asangwua Ikein, GPATS Transit Manager/Grants Manager, addressed members on the new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between Greenville-Pickens Area Transportation Study (GPATS) and the Greenville Transit Authority (GTA). Mr. Ikein pointed out to members that the MOU was included with the Agenda Packet for this meeting.

Mr. Ikein explained GPATS (over the last decade or so) was responsible for evaluating and ranking the FTA Section 5310 applicants and the purpose of this MOU is to move the management, ranking, and evaluating over to GTA/Greenlink.

Mr. Ikein made himself available for any questions.

MOTION: By GTA Chair Rusnak, seconded by Mayor Danner, to approve GPATS new Memorandum of Understanding with GTA as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

GPATS UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) AMENDMENT

Mr. Brockington said GTA/Greenlink has received a \$4 million BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) Grant and because it is a planning grant, it will need to be added to GPATS Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

Mr. Brockington asked if anyone had any questions or comments.

MOTION: By GTA Chair Rusnak, seconded by Mayor McLeer, to approve GPATS UPWP Amendment as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

GPATS FY2025-2034 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AC #10

Mr. Brockington addressed members on the TIP Amendment AC#10 reminding them the financial statement is included in today's Agenda Packet.

The following changes are being made to the non-Guideshare portion of the TIP:

- New project Bridge Replacement – I-85 (MP 49) over tributary to Laurel Creek – per SCDOT:
 - Add \$5 mil PE
 - Add \$500,000 ROW
 - Add \$50 mil CON
- New BUILD Grant for GTA/Greenlink
 - Add \$4 mil

Mr. Brockington said the remainder of the changes to the TIP are Guideshare/Regional Mobility Program funds, and he displayed a presentation to members to help explain the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief adjustments.

Mr. Brockington stated that in January of this year, GPATS was notified of increases to cost estimates for the SC-183 Corridor Improvements Project, but primarily for the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) Project. GPATS and SCDOT began discussions on impacts to GPATS Program funds. He added that in February 2026, the GPATS Policy Committee was notified of upcoming changes and a workshop was requested to dig deeper into the impacts of the increases. Mr. Brockington said that in April, GPATS held a workshop with a presentation by SCDOT on the changes and the initial path forward. Mr. Brockington stressed that GPATS must remain “in the black” to continue funding obligations. Throughout April, May, and June, GPATS staff and SCDOT worked on funding options, and updates were presented to the Policy Committee. In July, a draft proposal was submitted to the Study Team for recommendation of approval. Later, staff made revisions in consultation with SCDOT, and SCDOT Planning granted preliminary approval.

Mr. Brockington started with the projects that will remain mostly unchanged:

1. Butler Road (unchanged, letting for construction)
2. Woodruff Road Congestion Relief Project (construction scheduled)
3. City of Greenville Intersection Improvements (construction scheduled)
4. GTA/Greenlink Capital Annual Allocation (remains unchanged, \$2.92 million per year)
5. Projects that are fully obligated (West Georgia Road, Greenlink Bus Stops, and SC-183 @ Jameson intersection)

Next, Mr. Brockington pointed out the delayed projects:

1. Garlington Road (construction to begin after WRCR project is completed)
2. Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway (pushed two years out for practicalities of executing project)

Mr. Brockington said the removed projects (for now) are:

1. Batesville Road, Phase II
2. Mills Avenue, US-29
3. Grove Road
4. Rutherford Road @ James /Earle Streets
5. Laurens Road @ Woodruff Road
6. Wade Hampton Boulevard
7. US-25 @ Bessie/Sandy Springs
8. St. Mark Road
9. US-25 @ SC-253
10. US-123 in West Greenville
11. Travelers Rest Shared Use Path
12. SC-253 @ US-276
13. Laurens Road @ CU-ICAR
14. Greer to Taylors Greenway

15. Fairview Road
16. Clemson-Central Green Crescent Connector
17. City of Easley Doodle Trail Extension
18. SC-183 – GPATS portion
19. Main Street (Pickens @ Ann/Pendleton Streets)

Mr. Brockington then explained the changes to Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) Project include in FY2027 \$28.409 million (Phase I-clearing and grubbing portion of construction) and FY2029 \$50.968 million (Phase II of construction) and for FY2030-FY2032, the construction costs are now shown at \$38.571 million for each of the three fiscal years (the total of those three years is \$115,713,000 which will be advanced and programmed into FY2029). Mr. Brockington reiterated the phasing of the construction, with Clearing and Grubbing in Phase I, and all other construction costs in Phase II. Final construction is expected to be complete in 2034.

Mr. Brockington stated that the funds for the SC-183 project in Greenville County are to be removed (for now), and that amount is \$25 million. He said this is due to unknowns about scope and cost. Until the scope is narrowed and better cost estimates are available, it has been recommended to remove funding for now, as this project is not ready for construction, whereas the WRCR project is. In the meantime, the Pickens County portion of SC-183 still has its \$67 million from SCTIB and Pickens County. Mr. Brockington reminded members that the GPATS funds can be re-added at a later date, when available and if needed. In summary, he explained that the Guideshare funds for the Regional Mobility Program remain at \$29.2 million per year for the foreseeable future, and that in FY2032, funds for the WRCR project require a \$10 million advance from SCDOT to be repaid in FY2033. Finally, in FY2033, GPATS will have funds to begin adding projects back into the program.

Mr. Brockington said the next steps are to approve the GPATS TIP Amendment AC#10, as presented today; obtain SCDOT approval to finance a \$10 million advancement in FY2032; and obtain SCTIB approval for the funding structure and project delivery. He said SCDOT is on track to move forward with Phase I (clearing and grubbing) before the end of the year. GPATS will need to apply for a Federal BUILD (Better Utilizing Investments to Leverage Development) Grant (in 2027) to offset costs and restore many or all projects (ideally a \$50 million Grant).

Mr. Brockington explained that this will keep funding moving for active projects, if only delayed, and remove projects that have not yet started. The WRCR Project will obligate all construction funds by FY2029, and the budget remains tight through FY2032 but opens up in FY2033; most importantly, GPATS is kept “in the black” and will continue to move projects forward.

Mr. Brockington stated this TIP Amendment was advertised from July 19 through August 10, and the Study Team reviewed the amendment and suggested approval by consensus without objection.

Mr. Brockington made himself available for any questions.

Senator Rex Rice asked what the original total cost was and what the cost is today on the WRCR project.

Mr. Brockington replied that the original project cost was \$123 million and that today it is \$277 million.

Senator Rice asked about the original cost of the Right-of-Way acquisition and the current cost.

Ms. Groves stated that the Right-of-Way acquisition cost was \$43 million and is now \$75 million.

Senator Rice stressed the importance of obtaining accurate figures for project costs. He said costs will always go up, and that should be factored into the projected cost of any project. Senator Rice said the SC-183 project is already showing rising costs compared with the original projections. He said his concern was that costs are lowered for a project to get it on the books, and later on the costs are increased; the scenario we are facing today will continue to be a problem. Senator Rice stated that he is afraid this is happening regularly, and that there must be a way to obtain more accurate figures.

Senator Rice added that the Pickens side of the SC-183 project is still on the books, but GPATS is taking the Greenville side off. He said that the Greenville side is there because SCDOT said we aren't going to let you do just the Pickens side. He asked Mr. Brockington if he agreed with that statement.

Mr. Brockington agreed and added that without logical termini, a project like SC-183 would not be approved; the project could not just stop at the Saluda River/county line. Mr. Brockington explained that GPATS is not taking the project out of the TIP; they are just removing the funding until the project scope is better known and the funding amounts can be added back in later.

Mayor Knox White, City of Greenville, asked whether the original cost of the WRCR project was so much lower because it only extended to Miller Road at that time.

Mr. Brockington said the NEPA document extended the project across I-385, ending at Smith Hines Road.

Mayor Terry Merritt, City of Mauldin, stated that he wanted to be direct so everyone understood that the design and plans for the WRCR project, as they are, will not work and will not relieve the bottlenecks occurring. Mayor Merritt asked if the SCDOT could take the real estate (right-of-way acquisitions) and just put them "in your purse" for three or four years, come up with a better design or construction idea, and more accurate costs, and then do something.

GPATS Vice-Chairman, Mayor G.P. McLeer, City of Fountain Inn, voiced his concern that it took ten years to get to this point before even starting the construction phase. Mayor McLeer said that it is similar to the SC-183 project in that there are so many unknowns, and he doesn't like getting projects with so many unknowns. He also voiced his concerns about having to put so many other projects on pause to fund one project, and he agrees with Mayor Merritt that this project won't really help relieve congestion.

Mayor Merritt repeated his question about holding the WRCR project for now and possibly returning to it in a few years.

Mr. Brian Klauk, Director of Statewide Planning with SCDOT, replied No, we will not be able to do that. Mr. Klauk said once the NEPA has been done, this is GPATS' number one priority. It is a foundational fact that we need to do Woodruff Road first.

Mayor Merritt said, with all due respect, we are in this situation because of SCDOT. He said, delaying sixteen projects now, ten years of delays before even getting to construction, it is obvious where the problem is, but we don't know the solution yet.

Mayor White said, in his opinion, extending the project past Miller Road is a large part of the tremendous increase in costs. Ten years ago, it was a good project that sounded like it would help alleviate congestion, but that was ten years ago.

Discussions ensued on land use, infrastructure, access points, NEPA documents, and alternatives on Woodruff Road.

MOTION: By Mayor Danner, seconded by Representative Beach, to approve FY2025-2034 AC#10 Transportation Improvement Program as presented.

Due to objections from some members to the motion, one member requested a roll call, which was taken with 11 in favor of approval (Allen, Amidon, Beach, Christopher, Danner, Davis, Elliott, Rusnak, Saitta, Turner, and White). There was one abstention (Morgan) and three objections (McLeer, Merritt, and Rice). The motion carried 11-3, with one abstention.

OLD BUSINESS

There was no old business to be discussed.

NEW BUSINESS

Mr. Brockington announced that, due to scheduling conflicts, the Study Team meeting scheduled for September 14 has been moved to September 21.

Mr. Brockington reminded all members that GPATS Horizon2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan should be ready for adoption by the October 12, 2026 Policy Committee meeting and that it is critical that we reach a quorum.

Chairman Turner asked if there were any questions or comments. None were voiced.

ADJOURNMENT:

Without objection, Chairman Turner adjourned the meeting at 11:42 a.m.

Respectfully Submitted:



Recording Secretary
Cleo A. Hill