

MINUTES
GPATS POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
August 21, 2023
County Square – Council Chambers
10:00 a.m.

In person and remote participation by Committee members

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chairman Senator Rice, Senator Allen, Representative Collins, Representative Elliott, Councilor Fant, Councilor Kirven, Councilor Linvill, Councilor Russo, Councilor Wilson, Commissioner Christopher, Commissioner Metcalf, Mayor Amidon, Mayor Danner, Mayor McLeer, Mayor Merritt, Mayor Woods, Mayor Womack, GTA Chairwoman Smith, GCTC Chairwoman Sherlock and Keith Brockington.

OTHERS PRESENT: D. Beaty, A. Bodner, P. Butler, R. Cash, J. Chandler, T. Coker, E. Dillon, H. Gamble, R. Ballentine, C. Hill, N. Hinkle, A. Ikein, D. Lackey, C. Link, C. Lucas, N. Miglionico, B. Rewis, K. Roper, A. Stewart and B. Wilson.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Chairman Senator Rice called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

APPROVAL OF THE MAY 15, 2023 POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

MOTION: By Councilor Kirven, seconded by Mayor Womack to approve May 15, 2023 minutes. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no individuals signed up for public comment.

SCDOT PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Casey Lucas, Project Manager with the SCDOT, addressed the Committee members with a project update presentation included in the agenda packets:

- Upcoming Projects:
 - Garlington Road Corridor Study – Feasibility Study in progress. Consultant hired and expected completion is Spring 2024.

- Projects in Design:
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) – Currently in Right of Way (ROW).
 - S-107 Butler Road – Right of way (ROW) plans completed and ROW acquisitions are underway. On schedule for December 2024 let date.
 - SC-183 & Jameson Road Intersection – Began in 2015, placed on hold in 2017 due to pushback on roundabout (RAB), reactivated in 2019 and placed back on hold same year. Project reactivated in 2022, Public Information

Meeting (PIM) in July 2023 showing RAB design. This intersection is part of the corridor GPATS will be voting on during this meeting. The PIM in July had approximately 40 attendees, 56 comments received, and over 1200 website views. Public comments mostly agreed there are safety concerns and the intersection needed improvement.

- TAP Projects in Construction:
 - Fountain Inn Woodside Streetscape – Plans are completed. Not yet awarded. On schedule to be re-let in October of 2023.
 - Fountain Inn Woodside Connector – Project plans are completed. Was awarded additional funds by GPATS policy committee in October 2022. To be re-let in October 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 March of next year.
 - Town of Central Connector – Under development and preparing surveys.

- Guideshare Projects in Construction:
 - Roper Mountain Road (RMR)/Roper Mountain Road Ext. (RMRE) – Both are GPATS Guideshare projects. RMR - Curb and gutter is $\frac{3}{4}$ of the way completed and asphalt is being placed along the corridor. 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 progressing and pipe installation is ongoing.

- Completed Projects:
 - S-140 and S-250 – Both are non-guideshare bridge replacements in Pickens. Bridge is completed on S-140 and opened April 2023. S-250 project completed and bridge opened in June 2023.

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

GPATS TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM FY2023-2028 AC#5

Keith Brockington, GPATS Transportation Manager, addressed members on the proposed Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment AC#5 and advised the following changes:

- Award from FTA to GTA/Greenlink for Section 5339(c), “Low/No” Grant, \$6.34 million.

- At the request of Pickens County, acceleration of three high-ranked SC-183 projects from the GPATS Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) into the TIP as a single line item. SC-183 from SC-135 (Dacusville Hwy) to US-25 is a high-priority project in Pickens County with multiple sources of funding. After consultation with SCDOT, they are requesting \$28 million from GPATS Guideshare to fill the estimated funding gap. SCDOT and FHWA have given their approval for acceleration due to Local and State funding already secured for the project. The TIP would show:
 - \$3 million in FY2024 for Preliminary Engineering
 - \$5 million in FY2027 for Right of Way Acquisition
 - \$20 million yet to be programmed in FY 2029 or beyond for Construction

Mr. Brockington gave a brief history of the SC Transportation Infrastructure Bank (SCTIB) and gave examples of projects they have assisted with funds for; including the Ravenel Bridge in Charleston SC, the I-385 Gateway Project in Greenville, and also the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief Project in Greenville.

Mr. Brockington explained in June 2017 GPATS, on behalf of Pickens County, submitted an application to the SCTIB for two projects. One was for widening of SC-183 from SC-135 (Dacusville Highway) to Greenville County and the other was SC-153 extension-Phase III. After consultation with Pickens County and SCDOT, the SC-153 extension-Phase III was removed from the application to focus on the top priority project. Similarly, Greenville County had submitted, within the same time frame, an application for five projects and eventually narrowed those down to just one: Woodruff Road Congestion Relief Project.

Mr. Brockington stated SCTIB held off on applications, for internal reasons, until 2019 and requested updated project criteria. In 2020, GPATS/Pickens County submitted an updated application. Mr. Brockington explained in July 2020, the SCTIB Board met and voted on the first slate of projects and deferred others to future approval due to their funding constraint. He said Pickens County was deferred. In September 2022, SCTIB met to reconsider deferred applications.

Mr. Brockington said the Pickens County application was from SC-135 (Dacusville Highway) to just over the Greenville County line and the total cost is believed to be just under \$63.9 million. Mr. Brockington stated the SCTIB request was for \$44.7 million, the local match is \$19.2 million (which is approximately 30% of total cost), and SC General Assembly has earmarked \$10 million. He further explained the scores and other data included in the Agenda Packet. Mr. Brockington explained SCDOT assessed the project and stated additional scope and funding is needed due to “logical termini” requiring extension into Greenville County to White Horse Road (US-25). SCDOT also stated SC-183 bridge over Saluda River needs replacement and widening. Mr. Brockington stated Pickens County is requesting that GPATS Guideshare be allocated to fill the funding gap.

Mr. Brockington explained SCDOT Assessment and GPATS Horizon 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) in greater detail showing three SC-183 projects, all high ranking, proposing they be combined into one. He stated SCDOT and FHWA have given permission

to accelerate these three segments from the LRTP into the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) considering the high rank of all segments, significant local and state funding, and substantial safety concerns on this corridor. He explained SC-183 ranks high on South Carolina's list of deadly corridors pretty much every year. Mr. Brockington explained SCDOT estimates an additional \$28 million will be needed to supplement the current \$73.9 million. SCDOT broke that additional amount down to:

- FY2024 \$3 million for Preliminary Engineering
- FY2027 \$5 million for Right of Way acquisition
- FY2029 (outside of current TIP window) \$20 million for Construction.

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

Mayor McLeer asked if the three projects on the LRTP were going to be combined when moved to the TIP.

Mr. Brockington replied yes, that is correct, if project is broken into phases, then there would be more line items showing the phases but it will all be constructed at one.

Chairman Senator Rice asked if the additional funds were only for the Greenville County portion.

Mr. Brockington said the entire corridor is within GPATS boundary so it was both Pickens and Greenville County and it is considered as one project.

Chairman Rice expressed concerns he has about letting the Pickens County side and not having funds to let the Greenville County side.

Mr. Brockington introduced Brent Rewis, Deputy Secretary for Intermodal Planning with SCDOT, and asked him if he would clarify the construction plans.

Mr. Rewis stated an important component of this project is the one mile from the Greenville County line up to Groce Road was left out of the STIB application and that creates an hour glass effect. Mr. Rewis explained if widening is done on both county sides up to that one mile and then the roadway narrows again, that would cause serious problems. Mr. Rewis stated there were a couple of ways to go about the project from a construction standpoint. Mr. Rewis said construction could begin on the Greenville County side because that is where the majority of the traffic is and work toward the Pickens side or construction could begin on both ends if the project is fully funded.

Chairman Rice asked if it would be best to make the project into two projects, one being in Pickens County and the other being in Greenville County.

Mr. Rewis replied the main reason for requesting the additional funds is so the entire project could be fully funded and be listed as one line item.

Chairman Rice asked Mr. Brockington if the STIB money and Pickens County local match was programmed in to the TIP.

Mr. Brockington explained all final agreements with STIB and Pickens County need to be in place before GPATS is able to put the \$73.9 in to the TIP.

Mayor Danner asked for clarification on the TIP window.

Mr. Brockington explained the current tip window is 2023-2028 and the \$20 million for construction in fiscal year 2029, or beyond, will be programmed in the new TIP that GPATS will prepare in May 2024. Mr. Brockington stated that TIP will cover 2025-2030.

Ms. Walker Smith, Chairwoman for Greenville Transit Authority Board of Directors, asked if Pickens County had matching local funds would Greenville County also need to have local funds.

Mr. Brockington replied that there are enough funds in the Pickens County submission that Greenville County will not need to match additional local funds.

Councilor Kirven asked if this is voted on and approved, it is contingent on the STIB approving the other funds.

Mr. Brockington replied yes, that is correct.

MOTION: By Councilor Kirven, seconded by Mayor Danner to approve the Transportation Improvement Program Amendment FY2023-2028 AC #5 as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

GPATS CENSUS 2020 MPA BOUNDARY ADOPTION

Keith Brockington, GPATS Transportation Manager, addressed members on the Metropolitan Planning Area (MPA) boundary adoption.

Mr. Brockington explained at the end of 2022 and early 2023, the Census and FHWA released the resources for Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to begin redrawing MPA boundaries based off of the newly-defined Urbanized Areas (UZA) from the 2020 Census.

Mr. Brockington showed a presentation while explaining many areas shrank due to the Census Bureau redefining UZAs and a few grew. Mr. Brockington stated due to the concentrated growth on US-76 out of the City of Anderson, the Anderson UZA extended upwards toward the Clemson area and grew while Greenville UZA actually shrank back from Clemson. He stated the area along Greer, Duncan and Lyman close to Spartanburg Area Transportation Study (SPATS) are still a little blurred so the MPOs are consulting with SCDOT and FHWA to get a more concise boundary. Mr. Brockington added that he believes all the MPO's in the state are set and ready to go with new boundaries.

Mr. Brockington explained Anderson Area Transportation Study (ANATS) is now considered Anderson-Clemson Area Transportation Study (ACATS) and grew substantially into the Williamston, Pelzer, West Pelzer, Pendleton, Clemson, Central and Norris area.

Mr. Brockington stated Spartanburg Area Transportation Study (SPATS) have taken over the Woodruff area so they grew further south in Spartanburg County and SPATS and GPATS boundary lines are completely contiguous within Spartanburg County.

Mr. Brockington said Williamston, Pelzer, and West Pelzer is now their own small UZA and after consultation, they chose to move over the ACATS MPO. Pickens is also their own little UZA but there was no question that they would stay with GPATS because they are not close enough to the Anderson UZA.

Mr. Brockington reminded all attendees the link in the Agenda Packet will go to the interactive map showing all MPO and UZA boundaries.

Mr. Brockington stated at the next Policy Committee Meeting GPATS will address the By Laws and membership changes that will take place due to the new boundaries.

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

Chairman Rice asked about current projects that are maybe no longer in GPATS boundaries and what happens to those.

Mr. Brockington replied it depends on the funding, if the project is in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), but has not received any funding yet, GPATS will work with the other MPO to see how that transitions. Mr. Brockington gave the example of in the Clemson area GPATS (out of PL funds) Policy Committee approved study funding for Clemson to do an internal LRTP and because GPATS committed to that, will still be required to do so. GPATS has money programmed in fiscal year 2024 for the initial Preliminary Engineering of Clemson's Green Crescent Trail and GPATS will honor that commitment.

Mr. Brockington said his understanding is the Clemson project for US-123 has not yet been programmed in for funding, so GPATS will not be held liable for that project and more information will be brought forth as time passes.

Mayor Danner commended GPATS, GPATS Policy Committee, City of Greer, ACOG and SPATS for the work they all put forth together in the past years to understand and explain how this all works. Mayor Danner commented trying to learn about Transportation Planning and where the boundaries will be drawn between MPOs has been perplexing and caused much consternation; especially with the City of Greer being within two MPOs and two counties.

Chairman Rice asked if there were any more questions or comments.

MOTION: By Commissioner Christopher, seconded by Mayor McLeer to approve GPATS Census 2020 boundary adoption as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote. There were no objections.

NEW BUSINESS

GPATS 101 Training Session

Mr. Brockington stated GPATS still plans to schedule the training session very soon and it will be held in the training room on the second floor of the North building.

Chairman Rice asked what month it might be held in.

Mr. Brockington replied probably early September.

Ms. Walker Smith, Chairwoman for Greenville Transit Authority Board of Directors, asked for clarity on the membership changes.

Mr. Brockington replied the only changes known for sure are the loss of the Mayor of Clemson and the Mayor of Williamston due to the new boundaries.

Chairman Rice asked if will it be necessary to replace those Mayors or is there a number of members that are required.

Mr. Brockington explained GPATS' requirement for membership is representative of the area and since GPATS area shrank, it will not be necessary to replace those Mayors. Mr. Brockington re-iterated the By-Laws and membership numbers will be discussed in more detail at the next Policy Committee Meeting.

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

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION:

Without objection Chairman Senator Rice adjourned the meeting at 10:45 a.m.



Submitted by Recording Secretary