

MINUTES
GPATS STUDY TEAM COMMITTEE
September 21, 2026
Greenville County Square – Council Chambers
10:00 a.m.
In-person and remote participation by Study Team members

MEMBERS PRESENT: Austin Booth, Keith Brockington, Seth Duncan, William Flake, Michael Frixen, Megan Groves, Cleo Hill, Valerie Holmes, Asangwua Ikein, Brian Klauk, Mark LaBruyere, Skip Limbaker, Heather Lollis, Katerina Moreland, Ben Olson, Todd Oswald, Archit Patel, Mark Pleasant, and Nathan Wright.

OTHERS PRESENT: P. Butler, E. Dillon, T. Galloway, B. Groel and S. Timmons.

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

Keith Brockington, GPATS Transportation Manager, welcomed everyone in attendance and called the meeting to order at 10:03 a.m.

Mr. Brockington introduced Nathan Wright, GPATS Transportation Planner. He stated Nathan is filling the position previously held by Anna Stewart.

GPATS PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Megan Groves, Program Manager with SCDOT, addressed members with status updates on the following projects.

- Guideshare projects in construction were as follows:
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief – right-of-way (ROW) acquisition is complete. Utility and railroad coordination is current critical path. Possibly phasing construction contract for clearing and grubbing package. Expected to let Phase I in early 2027.
 - S-107 Butler Road – Project let in September 2026 and there were two that bid but they were higher than expected and so the bids were rejected. The low bid was \$50.8 million and SCDOT had anticipated it would be closer to \$32 million. SCDOT to hold a workshop and look closer at funding and ways to lower the costs, if possible. Project will be let again early 2027. Duke Energy is finishing their utility relocations with Charter and AT&T to follow.
 - Garlington Road – Project on hold as funding will not be available until 2032.
 - Batesville Road – Project on hold due to uncertainty of the I-85 widening project. The ROW phase was moved to 2028. Funding will be adjusted accordingly when there is a clearer path forward.
 - SC-183 & Jameson Road intersection – ROW acquisition is complete. Design and signal plans have been finalized. Temporary all way stop has been implemented at the intersection. Project letting expected in November 2026.
 - Pelham Road & Haywood Road intersection and Pleasantburg Drive & Rutherford Road intersection – Project scope to be reviewed with City of Greenville.
 - SC 183 Corridor Improvement – Greenville side of the project. Project on hold due to funding.

- Mauldin Golden Strip Greenway – Shared Use Path in Mauldin from Innovation Drive to Butler Road currently in PE. Project on hold until 2028.
- TA Programs were as follows:
 - Town of Central Connector – Contract awarded to Southern Concrete & Construction, Inc. with a completion date of November 30, 2026.
 - Multi-use trail along Bryson Drive and Bryson Heights Drive (UGATA) – Preliminary Plans continue to be developed with current let date expected to be December 2027.
- Non-Guideshare projects:
 - SC 183 Corridor Improvement –Evaluating reduced scope due to funding and have ongoing discussions with the SIB.
- SCDOT Bridges (non-guideshare) updates included:
 - US-29 Church Street – Bridge reopened to traffic on Monday, June 15th. Contractor working on few remaining items to close out the project.
 - S-125 over Saluda River – Project on hold with current let day 2033.
 - S-384 over Brushy Creek – On hold with current let day in 2033.
 - S-250 over Machine Creek – Contract awarded to Kemp Sigmon Construction Co. Inc. Clearing complete and erosion control devices installed. Shoulder buildup in progress, crane delivering this week, setup to remove existing piles then drill for new piles. Completion scheduled for May 2027.
 - S-149 over Brushy Creek – Final plans are complete. Waiting on utility relocations. Letting is scheduled January 2027.
 - US-276 over North Saluda River – Carolina TEA is the consultant that was selected and they were given Notice to Proceed on June 1st. Preliminary design underway with current let date of FY2028.
 - S-277 over Twelve Mile Creek (Closed Bridge) – ROW plans under development with a current let date of FY2027. Additional coordination with federal land has caused some delays.
 - S-507 over Langston Creek (Closed Bridge) – ROW acquisitions are ongoing and final plans have been reviewed and approved. Bids were accepted and low bidder was Wright Brothers Construction, Inc. Current let date is September 2026.
- Design Build Bridge Package 16:
 - SC-183 over Gregory Creek
 - SC-183 over Twelve Mile Creek
 - SC-124 over George’s Creek
 - US-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. US-123NB is complete and opened to traffic in January. US-123SB is expect to be completed in April 2027.
- Design Build Bridge Package 19:
 - S-40 over South Saluda River
 - S-102 over Armstrong Creek
 - S-310 over tributary to Richland Creek
 - S-94 over tributary to Enoree River

- S-40 over Saluda Overflow
- S-26 over tributary to Saluda River
 - All six bridges are replacements and contract awarded to E. S. Wagner Company, LLC. Plan development underway. Construction underway for Pace Bridge Road (S-40) with completion expected December 2026.
- Safety Improvements:
 - SC-183 Safety Improvements – Project awarded to Palmetto Corporation of Conway with a completion date of August 2026. Contractor completed ADA ramp work and new signal pole foundation work. Electrical Subcontractor working on signal upgrades this month into next month.
 - US-29 Safety Improvements – Contract awarded to Palmetto Corporation of Conway. Contractor is submitting a recovery plan to complete the project on schedule. Signal work is planned to begin on September 21, 2026. Construction start date has been delayed to August 2026.
- Vulnerable Road Users (Section Corridor Improvements):
 - River Street/Richardson Street –Developing preliminary plans. Expected let date is early 2027.
 - US-29 Wade Hampton Boulevard – Expected let date is November 2026.
 - US-276 Poinsett Highway – Developing preliminary plans. Schedule could move due to acquiring additional ROW.

Ms. Groves made herself available for questions.

Mr. Brockington added that funding for the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief project is still being discussed, and the State Infrastructure Bank is part of the discussion because the intergovernmental agreement with Greenville County will need to be modified. Then GPATS will work on getting the formal approval from SCDOT on the \$10 million advancement in FY2032.

Mr. Seth Duncan, Mauldin City Administrator, asked when the Butler Road project will be open for bids again.

Ms. Groves said January is optimistic. Still, February seems more realistic because contractors had many questions and comments, and SCDOT hopes to clear up some of those issues before re-letting the project.

Mr. Duncan asked if the lowest bid was \$50.8 million, and whether there is any indication from the other contractors (who were unable to bid) that their bid will come in lower, or whether we are looking at a design or scope change.

Ms. Groves said it will probably be larger than the engineer's initial estimate; however, they hope it will be lower than the \$50.8 bid. She said they believe many of the costs were utilities and lump sums. The lump sums were off by about \$10 million, which indicates risks associated with the project. She said that is why SCDOT is looking more closely at the project to see if there is a way to lower that risk.

Mr. Duncan asked Mr. Brockington whether the cost on the TIP for Butler Road is now \$34 million and, if so, what will happen if the bid comes in the low \$40s.

Mr. Brockington said he didn't have the exact amount in front of him, but that figure sounded about right. He added once SCDOT accepts the bid, it typically goes through, and in GPATS' obligations report, it will show as "right sizing". He explained the TIP is a planning document and not the actual obligations.

Ms. Groves agreed and added that having only two bids made it difficult to justify the amount under the award criteria.

Brian Klauk, SCDOT Director of Statewide Planning, added that regarding the \$10 million advancement, in FY2032, SCDOT will keep that figure as a placeholder. He explained that the amount may not be enough; given Butler Road's high bids, it may need to be more and/or shifted to another fiscal year. Mr. Klauk stated the advancement is not specifically for Woodruff; it is for GPATS program.

Mr. Brockington said one option under consideration is a BUILD Grant to help offset costs, since we are at such a high estimate; as long as SCDOT is okay with prospective cost increases, we will move forward as best we can. Mr. Brockington said his understanding is that GPATS needs to request the advancement before Phase I of WRCR moves forward, even though the overrun won't be needed until FY2032.

TRANSPORTATION PERFORMANCE MEASURES, LRTP AND TIP AMENDMENTS

Nathan Wright, GPATS Transportation Planner, updated members on an amendment to the GPATS Horizon 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Performance Measures, as required by federal law for all Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). An amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program Document will also be required. Mr. Wright gave a brief presentation explaining safety targets and performance measures.

Mr. Wright explained that an amendment to the GPATS FY2025-2034 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Document is needed to bridge TPMs from the LRTP into project selection and implementation.

The Performance Measure item to be amended is the Safety Targets, which GPATS updates each September. Mr. Wright showed a presentation explaining the amendment in more specific detail. He stated GPATS rate of traffic fatalities was lower than statewide; however, GPATS rate of serious injuries was higher than statewide. He added that GPATS progress from last year's baseline shows fatality rates are lower, but serious injuries are higher. Additionally, the number of non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries has decreased compared to last year's baseline.

Mr. Wright announced GPATS' new interactive crash data map shows crashes that occurred within GPATS boundaries from January 1, 2017 to December 31, 2025. He said the map is on the GPATS website at <https://gpats.org/Programs/InteractiveMapping.aspx>.

Mr. Wright made himself available for questions.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval, or any objections, from the members to recommend an amendment to the Long-Range Transportation Plan to reflect updated Safety Targets, as presented, to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval, or any objections, from the members to recommend an amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program Document to reflect updated Safety Targets, as presented, to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

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

Brennan Groel, Transportation Planner with HDR, updated members on the progress of GPATS Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). She presented a timeline of activities that were accomplished in order to build on the LRTP, as shown below.

February 2026	Kick-Off
February-April	Branding/Web Portal Design
March – April	Public Engagement Plan
April	Call for Projects
April – May	Travel Demand Model Review
March – May	Existing Conditions Assessment
April	Web Portal went live
May	Public Engagement Round 1
May – July	Alternatives Assessment
July	Public Engagement Round 2
August – September	Prioritization and Fiscal Constraint

Ms. Groel explained the prioritization approach, beginning with collecting public input on study area needs, creating the project list, comparing and scoring the project list against criteria, ranking the projects based on weighted scores, adding the fiscal constraints to the list, and the final step is moving projects to the TIP for implementation. The resulting project list includes 67 corridor projects, 43 intersection projects, eight signal projects, and 32 bike and pedestrian projects, for a total of 150 projects.

Ms. Groel said specific guiding statements were used to help rank the projects by assigning a weight to each one that applied to the project. She explained the guiding statements as shown below.

- Culture and Environment
- Growth and Development
- Safety and Security
- Economic Value
- Mobility and Accessibility
- Systems Preservation and Efficiency
- Public Emphasis (this goal was removed after SCDOT feedback)

These guiding statements had specific weights depending on the project type (Bike/Ped, Corridor, Intersection, or signal).

Ms. Groel said that during public engagement, people could review the goals and statements and identify which ones mattered most to them. Several performance measures were identified to assess how well they were bringing GPATS toward its goals.

Ms. Groel displayed a chart showing the weights before and after SCDOT feedback. She said the team initially reviewed whether a project originated from stakeholder feedback and considered this in the scoring weight. SCDOT provided feedback on those weights, saying that, to follow PD 15 and Act 114, some weights needed to be adjusted. (SCDOT's PD 15, or Planned Directive 15, outlines how Metropolitan Planning Organizations or MPOs score and rank transportation projects, and it implements SC Act 114). Ms. Groel explained that this is why she presented "before and after weights" to show the weights before and after SCDOT feedback and how that affected them. She gave an example of how the public emphasis criterion was lowered across the board, from 5% to 0%. Another area where adjustments were made under Mobility & Accessibility: bike and ped connections were originally weighted at 25% and were brought down to 10%. The difference was distributed to other weights, increasing Bus Service from 5% to 10% and splitting Safety Improvements and Crashes to 17.5% each instead of 25% for Crashes alone.

Ms. Groel then explained the Prioritization Matrix and the scoring that goes along with the guiding statements. Each guiding statement has a measure, metric, and score. For example, under Culture & Environment, Floodplain and Wetlands score zero if the project touches a floodplain or wetland but score a five if it does not. She gave several other examples while displaying the Prioritization Matrix chart.

Mr. Todd Oswald, SCDOT Regional Planning Manager, asked for clarification on how GPATS and HDR communicated with SCDOT to alter the weights and request adjustments regarding PD 15 weights.

Ms. Groel stated that the variance request followed a specific format that included both a letter and a table created to show the variances clearly. Ms. Groel displayed the letter and table to describe the process better. The table shows the SCDOT Recommended Weight for each criterion and the New Horizon 2050 LRTP Proposed Weight, with justification for the variance. The table was categorized by project type (Corridor Improvements/Widening, New Location Roadway Improvements, Intersections and Signals, and Bike and Pedestrian).

Brian Klauk, SCDOT Director of Statewide Planning, commented that, for posterity, this needs to be better mapped out because the variance request is a little hard to follow. He suggested GPATS begin with PD 15 weights and then show how the Horizon 2050 LRTP weights vary, clearly showing how you got to that. Mr. Klauk said the request was granted and approved, but it was hard to follow.

Mr. Klauk then asked what proposal was coming out from this team today for the Policy Committee.

Mr. Brockington answered that, based on feedback from SCDOT last week, the Study Team will not request a recommendation for adoption by the Policy Committee. The presentation Ms. Groel is providing now is for information only, and at the January 2027 Study Team meeting, GPATS plans to request a recommendation for adoption. He added that the Policy Committee will hear that recommendation and vote on adoption in February of next year, and GPATS is ahead of the timeframe so waiting a little longer will be fine.

Mr. Klauk agreed that was the best approach and suggested creating a document to clear up confusion about the approved weights and variances.

Ms. Groel continued with the presentation, explaining the fiscally constrained plan by project type (Roadway, Intersection, Bike and Pedestrian, and Signals). Each of these was shown as Short Term

(2033-2036), Mid Term (2037-2043), or Long Term (2044-2050), with a 2026 estimated cost and year of expenditure cost.

Ms. Groel said the comment map and contact form will be available on the web portal throughout the study, and she encouraged attendees to visit <https://gpatshorizon2050.com/>. She added that once GPATS staff have reviewed and commented on the Draft Horizon 2050 LRTP Document, it will be on the portal as well.

Mr. Brockington also commented on the Draft LRTP Document and that once it is on the web portal, GPATS will send out an email announcement letting everyone know it is available. He suggested sharing it with your committees and stakeholders that may be interested. He also said it is important to note this has not been edited based on the potential sales tax that could be moving forward in November. Based on what we know, there are some overlaps between what we have on our list and what Greenville County, the City of Greenville, the City of Mauldin, and the City of Travelers Rest may have on theirs. If you know your preference, if your sales tax passes, and you have projects that are also on the LRTP, GPATS needs that information to assess whether more room should be made on the LRTP for your projects. He is predicting there are a few options: Remove the project from GPATS LRTP; if the city would allow GPATS to go forward with the project (saving the jurisdiction their sales tax money); or possibly some type of hybrid, like many MPOs do with local funds, they could go LPA with those projects and supplement the municipal dollars with the federal funding in coordination with SCDOT. Mr. Brockington said to keep in mind that those doing the sales tax increases should review the GPATS LRTP project list for overlapping projects, and GPATS will be happy to work with the municipalities.

Mr. Seth Duncan, Mauldin City Administrator, said their projects do not overlap and focus more on neighborhood roads, and their projects with GPATS focus on SCDOT infrastructure.

Mr. Klauk reiterated that he would like to work with GPATS and HDR a little more on the mapping exercise and clarify where the variances are and how they came to be.

Mr. Brockington noted that work and approvals are still needed on the LRTP Document, as well as the project list. He said the next Policy Committee meeting will include an update, allowing members to comment and ask questions, but no action is needed at this time. He reminded attendees that the recommendation for adoption will be requested in January and passed to the GPATS Policy Committee for consideration and adoption in February of next year.

GPATS CALENDAR YEAR 2027 MEETING SCHEDULE

Keith Brockington presented members with the proposed GPATS 2027 meeting schedule. The planned schedule is for the following dates and all meetings are to be held at 10 a.m. in Greenville County Council Chambers.

GPATS Study Team:

January 25
April 12
July 12
September 13

GPATS Policy Committee:

February 22
May 17
August 9
October 11

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval, or any objections, from the members to recommend the GPATS 2027 meeting schedule, as presented, to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

OLD BUSINESS

None.

NEW BUSINESS

GPATS MEMBERS, BY LAWS, AND QUORUM

Mr. Brockington said that with SCDOT abolishing the Commission and appointing the Secretary of Transportation, the GPATS Policy Committee will have two fewer members. He said many other MPOs keep members who would be “rolling off” as At Large Members, and this is an option, or they can simply have two fewer members. In either case, GPATS bylaws will need to be updated, and if we have fewer members, the quorum will also need to be changed. This will be an action item on the February Agenda.

Mr. Klauk added that it is a requirement that at least one SCDOT representative be on every TMA (Transportation Management Area) Policy Committee, and discussions are being planned with all TMAs to ensure they are fulfilling this requirement.

Mr. Brockington thanked him for the information and said he looks forward to the discussion.

REQUEST BY SENATOR JASON ELLIOTT

Mr. Brockington said at the request of Senator Elliott, there will be a more in-depth presentation on the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) Project explaining exactly what the project is, the scope and extent, how it started, and where we are today. He wanted everyone to know that this detailed report will be given at the next GPATS Policy Committee Meeting in October.

GPATS 2025-2034 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM AC #11

Mr. Brockington stated that Greenville Transit Authority (GTA) made a last-minute request for an Amendment to GPATS 2025-2034 TIP to reflect FTA Section 5339, for the Mauldin-Simpsonville Urbanized Area, in the amount of \$259,695 (Federal) and \$64,924 (local) in the fiscal year 2026.

Mr. Brockington said this amendment will be known as AC#11.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval, or any objections, from the members to pass the Transportation Improvement Program amendment AC#11 recommendation to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

Mr. Brockington asked if anyone had any more items to discuss, questions, or comments.

Ms. Katerina Moreland, Greenville Transit Authority Transit Finance and Compliance Administrator, announced GTA’s Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan is still open for public comment until September 24. Ms. Moreland encouraged all that are interested to go online and submit their comments.

Ms. Moreland added that they had a great turn out for the Meet and Greet public meeting.

ADJOURN

Without objection, Mr. Brockington adjourned the meeting at 10:46 a.m.

Respectfully submitted:

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cleo A. Hill". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Recording Secretary
Cleo A. Hill