



U.S. Department of Transportation

Federal Transit Administration
Region IV
230 Peachtree Street, NW
Suite 1400
Atlanta, GA 30303
404-865-5600
404-865-5605 (fax)

Federal Highway Administration
South Carolina Division
Strom Thurmond Federal Building
1835 Assembly St, Suite 1270
Columbia, SC 29201
803-765-5411
803-253-3989 (fax)

November 18, 2025

Keith Brockington
GPATS Transportation Manager
Greenville County Planning Department
Greenville County Square
301 University Ridge
Greenville, SC 29601

Dear Mr. Brockington:

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) continues the requirement for Certification of the transportation planning process in urbanized areas over 200,000 population once every four years. Certification reviews are conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) with the objective of evaluating the transportation planning process. These reviews are also conducted with a goal to highlight good practices, exchange information, identify opportunities for improvements, and ensure that Federal regulatory requirements for transportation planning are being met.

FHWA and FTA conducted a formal Certification Review of the transportation planning process for the Greenville Pickens Area Transportation Study (GPATS) on September 22, 2025. The cooperative transportation planning process as conducted by the State and local government in the area was assessed and the findings are enclosed in the report entitled "*Certification Review Report for the Greenville Pickens Area Transportation Study.*" The purpose of this report is to determine the extent of compliance with regulatory requirements, recognize noteworthy practices, identify problem areas, and provide assistance and guidance as appropriate.

There are recommendations included in the report for your consideration, which offer opportunities for improving current processes and your prompt attention to these items is most appreciated.

The Federal Review Team has evaluated and discussed the major transportation planning process components for the GPATS MPO and finds the transportation planning process for the GPATS MPO area meets the requirements of 23 USC 134 and 23 CFR 450 subpart C and is hereby certified.

Your participation and continued cooperation in this process is greatly appreciated. Please contact Mr. Mark Pleasant of the FHWA at (803) 253-3435 or Mr. John Croker of FTA at (404) 865-5624 with any questions that you may have regarding this process.

Sincerely yours,

Jermaine R. Hannon
Division Administrator
Federal Highway Administration

Yvette G. Taylor
Yvette G. Taylor, PhD
Regional Administrator
Federal Transit Administration

Enclosure

ec:

Brian Klauk, SCDOT

Leah Quattlebaum, SCDOT

Aaron Dawson, FHWA SC

Yolanda Lott, FHWA-HQ

John Crocker, FTA Region IV



Prepared by:

Federal Highway Administration

South Carolina Division

Federal Transit Administration

Region 4

2025 Certification Report

**Greenville Pickens Area
Transportation Study**

GPATS MPO

November 2025

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Executive Summary

Federal Law requires the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to jointly certify the transportation planning processes of Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) at least every four years (a TMA is an urbanized area, as defined by the US Census, with a population over 200,000). A certification review generally consists of four primary activities: a site visit, a review of planning documents (in advance of the site visit), the development and issuance of a FHWA/FTA certification report and a certification review closeout presentation to the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) governing board.

As a part of the TMA certification review process, FHWA and FTA utilize a risk-based approach containing various factors to determine which topic areas required additional evaluation during the certification review. The certification review process is only one of several methods used to assess the quality of a regional metropolitan transportation planning process, compliance with applicable statutes and regulations, and the level and type of technical assistance needed to enhance the effectiveness of the planning process. This certification review was conducted to highlight best practices, identify opportunities for improvements, and ensure compliance with regulatory requirements.

Greenville County is the designated MPO responsible for carrying out the urban transportation planning process for the Greenville Pickens Transportation Study (GPATS). The last certification review was completed in 2021. The Federal Review Team conducted a site visit for the current review on September 22, 2025. The Federal Review Team recognizes two noteworthy practices, identifies no corrective actions, and offers ten recommendations the MPO should consider for improving their planning processes. More information related to these findings can be found in the Findings/Conclusions section of this report.

Based on the overall findings of the certification review, the FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the GPATS MPO, substantially meets the federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. This certification will remain in effect until November 18, 2029.

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GPATS Metropolitan Planning Organization

Section I. Overview of the Certification Process

Under provisions of 23 CFR 450.336(b) and 49 CFR 613.100, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) must jointly certify the planning process of Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) “not less often than once every four years.” This four-year cycle runs from the date of issuance of the previous joint certification report.

The primary purpose of a certification review is to formalize the continuing oversight and evaluation of the planning process. The FHWA and the FTA work cooperatively with the TMA planning staff on a regular basis. By reviewing and approving planning products, providing technical assistance, and promoting best practices, the formal assessment involved in a certification review provides an external view of the TMA’s transportation planning process.

A certification review generally consists of four primary activities. These activities include: 1) a “desk audit” which is a review of the TMA’s planning documents (e.g. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP); 2) a “site visit” with staff from the TMA’s various transportation planning partners, state DOTs, local/regional transit service provider, and other participating state/local agencies), including opportunities for local elected officials and the general public to provide comments on the TMA planning process; 3) a Certification Report, which the Federal Review Team prepares, to document the results of the review process; and, 4) a formal presentation of the review findings at a future GPATS Policy Committee meeting.

Certification of the planning process is a prerequisite to the approval of Federal funding for transportation projects in metropolitan areas. The certification review also helps ensure that the major issues facing a metropolitan area are being addressed. The review process is individually tailored to focus on topics of significance in each metropolitan planning area. Since 2018, to initiate the TMA certification review process, the Federal Review Team has utilized a risk-based approach containing various factors to determine which topic areas required additional evaluation during the certification review. The Review Team focused on Safety, the GPATS Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) or Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and the Congestion Management Plan. Other topics were thoroughly reviewed and discussed during the desk audit and site visit.

The review of the GPATS MPO was held on September 22, 2025. During this site visit, the Federal Review Team met with the GPATS staff, South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT), and Greenville Transit Authority Greenlink. See **Appendix A** for a list of review team members and site visit participants, and **Appendix B** for the TMA Certification Meeting Agenda.

An input session was advertised for the public and no comments were received by FHWA and FTA during the 30-day comment period. A copy of the public engagement notice can be found in **Appendix C**.

A summary of the 2021 corrective actions and recommendations and status can be found in **Appendix D**.

An explanation of planning acronyms can be found in **Appendix E**.

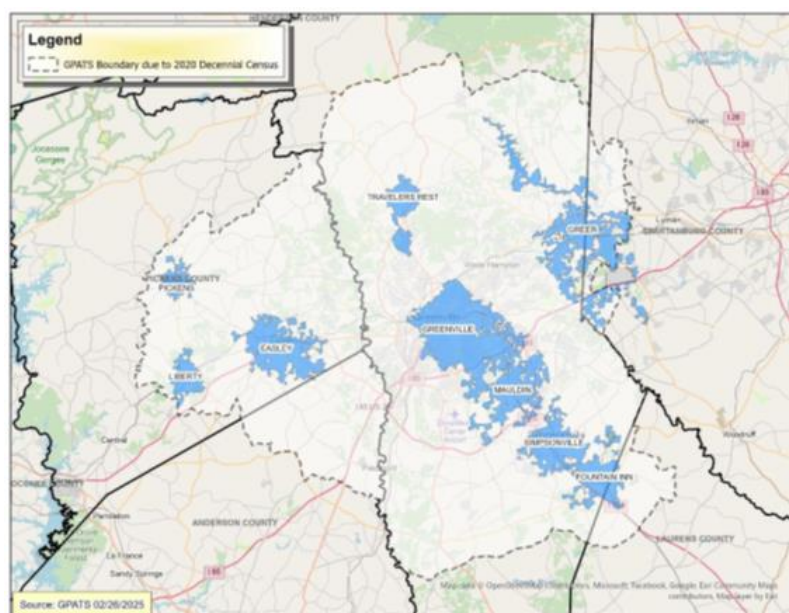
Section II. Boundaries and Organization (23 CFR 450.310, 312, 314)

A. Description of Planning Area

Observations: The GPATS Study Area (see map below) makes up two urbanized areas (UZAs) including Greenville and Mauldin-Simpsonville that include: Greenville, Pickens, Anderson, Spartanburg, and Laurens County. It contains the municipalities of Easley, Fountain Inn, Greenville, Greer, Liberty, Mauldin, Pickens, Simpsonville, and Travelers Rest.

GPATS is one of 11 MPOs in the state of South Carolina. The MPO boundary is adjacent to the Spartanburg Area Transportation Study (SPATS) and Anderson/Clemson Area Transportation Study (ACATS) formally Anderson Area Transportation Study (ANATS) MPO.

After the 2020 Census, the Anderson and Clemson UZAs combined triggering a redesignation for ANATS. This redesignation created ACATS. The new MPO represents Anderson, Clemson, along with 7 other cities and portions of Anderson and Pickens Counties. As a result, the GPATS urbanized area contracted, reducing the area to 820 square miles (previously 905 square miles) and the population totals to 690,528 (previously 708,548).



GPATS remains one of the largest MPOs in the state in terms of population. The boundaries include the entire existing urbanized area (as defined by the Bureau of the Census) plus the contiguous area expected to become urbanized within a 20-year forecast period for the LRTP.

B. Metropolitan Planning Organization Structure

Observations: The Policy Committee consist of elected and appointed officials representing governmental entities within the GPATS Study area. The Study Team, designated by the Policy Committee and MPO member jurisdictions, consist of representatives of public agencies and other associations having technical knowledge of transportation and/or planning within the GPATS Area. Because of the 2020 Census redesignation (refer to previous section A. Description of Planning Area), membership changes to both the Policy Committee and Study Team are reflected in the GPATS Bylaws.

GPATS has four full time positions that are exclusively dedicated to transportation planning for the MPO: Transportation Planning Manager, Transit Planner/Grants Manager, Transportation Planner, and Administrative Assistant.

Finding: The MPO's boundaries and organization substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.310 and 312.

C. Agreements

Current Agreement(s):

- Agreement Between South Carolina Department of Transportation and the Greenville Pickens Area Transportation Study Metropolitan Planning Organization - PL Agreement signed in 2025.
- Memorandum of Agreement between the Greenville Pickens Area Transportation Study and the Greenlink/Greenville Transit Authority signed in 2025.

Finding: The MPO's transportation performance planning activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.314.

Section III. Transportation Performance Planning (23 CFR 450.306(a), 306(d), 314(h), 324(f), 326(c), 326(d))

Observations: The MPO adopted all required highway targets for safety, National Highway System (NHS) bridge, pavement, and system performance. They documented the adoption and support of state DOT defined targets.

The MPO integrates elements of state DOT Highway Safety Improvement Programs, Strategic Highway Safety Plan's, Asset Management Plan's and Freight Plan's goals, objectives, measures, and targets into the Horizon 2040 and 2045 LRTP. They also included a system performance report and evaluated the condition and performance of the transportation system with respect to the federally required performance targets, including progress achieved by the MPO in meeting the performance targets in comparison with system performance recorded in previous reports and baseline data.

The MPO should be commended for the transparency and documentation provided in Appendix D (Project Prioritization and Ranking) of the LRTP that demonstrates the MPO's project prioritization methodology and its direct links to performance goals. This is a best practice and helps ensure that limited resources are applied objectively to projects with significant need.

SCDOT originally developed Transportation Performance Management (TPM) MOUs in 2017 to facilitate the sharing of information with MPOs related to transportation performance data, selection of performance targets, reporting of targets, and reporting of performance outcomes. SCDOT recently included updated TPM coordination practices within in the PL agreements rather than maintain standalone TPM MOUs.

Finding: The MPO's transportation performance planning activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.306, 314, 324, and 326.

Section IV. Scope of the Planning Process (23 CFR 450.306)

A. Transportation Planning Factors

Observations: The transportation planning factors are reflected in the GPATS UPWP with a matrix of related MPO activities and in the development of transportation planning products.

Finding: The MPO's planning process satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.306(b).

B. Air Quality

Finding: The GPATS MPO is currently designated as an attainment area for all National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS).

C. Bicycle and Pedestrian Planning Activities

Observations: GPATS collaborates with stakeholders and nonprofit groups such as Bike Walk Greenville to ensure bicycle and pedestrian initiatives are considered and implemented throughout the MPO's transportation system.

GPATS inaugural bike/ped plan is expected to be developed through SCDOT's planning on-call consultant or developed by the MPO to comply with the Complete Streets Directive.

Finding: The MPO's bicycle and pedestrian planning activities substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.306(b), 324(f), and 326.

D. Transit

Observations: During the last certification review in 2021, GPATS MPO had two transit agencies operating fixed route service within GPATS's region: Clemson Area Transit (CAT) and Greenlink. As a result of the 2020 Census boundary changes, transit planning in the Clemson region is managed by the City of Clemson. Greenlink, operated by the City of Greenville, under contract to Greenville Transit Authority (GTA), is now the only transit service provider for GPATS.

GTA contracts with the City of Greenville. Currently, GTA offers three services which are fixed route, Greenville Area Paratransit (GAP), and trolley. Fixed route services are offered Monday-Friday with modified service reductions on Saturday. There are twelve routes providing approximately 190 miles of service. Trolley services are available in the downtown area Monday- Sunday.

The newly built transit facility ribbon cutting was held December 2024. The facility was built for growth which the building holds the thirteen peak services buses and can hold up to forty-eight. Per the updated Transit Development Plan (TDP) in 2021, initially developed in 2018, GTA anticipates expanding services by increasing Saturday services to reflect weekday services and improving headway frequencies to 30 minutes. It is anticipated to added Sunday service which would allow GTA to expend in other areas within the service area. An RFP was advertised to create a new TDP which will be structured to support a financially phased approached.

GPATS successfully worked with SCDOT to transfer Federal-Aid funding and state match to support a Greenlink Capital RAISE Grant. The project will fund construction activities for bus stop infrastructure including shelters, push button lighting, and benches around the MPO area.

To continue supporting a multimodal approach addressing transportation needs within the region, it was discussed during the review meeting the recent benefits and anticipated reoccurring need to flex Federal-Aid Highway funding for priority transit investments. For example, the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG), allows recipients to transfer funds to be administered by FTA for local eligible public transportation projects.

Finding: The MPO's transit activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 49 CFR 613.100 as well as the transit supportive elements outlined in 23 CFR 450 with the following recommendation(s):

- If proposing to flex FHWA funding to FTA in the future and in coordination with SCDOT, develop a process outlining procedures for initiating the transfer of eligible Federal Aid Highway Program Funding to FTA in support of MPO and COG priority projects with a transit nexus.

E. Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS)

Observations: Through the development of the LRTP, TIP and coordination with SCDOT, the GPATS MPO implements projects consistent with the latest statewide ITS architectures. The GPATS MPO was a stakeholder in the development of the SCDOT Statewide Transportation System Management and Operations (TSMO) Master Plan and considers the plan's analysis and recommendations in the congestion management process.

SCDOT owns and maintains approximately 465 signals within GPATS, while the City of Greenville maintains an additional 200 signals on behalf of the state DOT. The City of Greenville also owns and maintains an additional 14 signals. In coordination with SCDOT, the MPO intends to utilize Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) funds to advance traffic signalization improvements.

Finding: The MPO's ITS activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.306, 322, and 23 CFR 940.

F. Freight Planning

Observations: The GPATS LRTP assess the existing freight network, trends, and public feedback to develop strategies that enhance the movement of goods within and through the GPATS region. GPATS provides reasonable opportunities for freight providers and shippers to give input into the development of the MPO transportation plan and TIP.

The Upstate Regional Mobility Freight Plan completed in 2021 included participation from GPATS, ACATS, SPATS, and the Appalachian Council of Governments. The plan provides recommendations and action items for implementation.

Finding: The MPO's freight planning activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.306, 316, 324, and 326 with the following recommendation(s):

- Consider the development of an MOU with regional stakeholders to support ongoing freight planning efforts and plan implementation.

G. Security Considerations in the Planning Process

Observations: The GPATS MPO will incorporate relevant security measures and priorities into the upcoming LRTP update scheduled for 2026. The MPO coordinates with state and local agencies to review processes, plans, and programs in its transportation planning processes.

Finding: The MPO's security planning activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.306, 324(f), 324(h), and 326.

H. Safety Considerations in the Planning Process

Observations: Based on the desk audit review and knowledge of the GPATS MPO practices, the Review Team identified Safety as a risk area for the MPO and was subsequently included as a focused discussion topic during the onsite meeting.

The MPO incorporates components of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) priorities, goals, countermeasures, and strategies and the Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan into the LRTP, includes safety projects in the TIP, and includes safety in project prioritization processes. GPATS is commended for having safety designated as one of the highest weighted factors of the project prioritization process.

Unfortunately, a comparison of the federal Safety Performance measures for the six Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) in South Carolina does not reflect well for GPATS. The 2024 STAMP System Performance Report illustrates that GPATS performed poorly as measured by the five federal metrics, including: Fatalities (ranks highest), Fatality Rate (ranks highest), Serious Injuries (ranks 2nd highest), Serious Injury Rate (ranks highest), and Non-Motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries (ranks 2nd highest). Fortunately, in recently published reports that incorporates 2024 crash data, GPATS has shown improvements in all five of the federal metrics.

SCDOT introduced AASHTOWare Safety at the 2025 MPO-COG Academy to demonstrate a new software platform to improve accessibility to safety data, with the ability to create queries and custom reports to support local study efforts. Increased accessibility to safety data has been a long-standing desire of MPOs in the state and the new database provides an opportunity to further integrate safety into all facets of the metropolitan planning process.

Finding: The MPO's safety planning activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.306, 324(h), and 326 with the following recommendation(s):

- Consider opportunities to further integrate the use of the AASHTOWare Safety application for planning products and processes to advance the MPO's emphasis of improving safety for all modes of transportation. Coordinate with SCDOT to expand the use of the application with local governments within the GPATS planning area to

strategically identify opportunities to incorporate FHWA's Proven Safety Countermeasures where appropriate to improve safety measures in the GPATS Study Area.

Section V. Unified Planning Work Program (23 CFR 450.308)

Current Document Title: GPATS Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) FY 2026 & 2027

Date Adopted: 2025

Observations: The GPATS UPWP highlights major accomplishments from previous fiscal years and activities for the subsequent fiscal years. It was noted during the desk audit that the year-end PL reporting did not include a description of accomplishments detailing status of product and deliverables.

Planning funds provided by FTA are combined via Consolidated Planning Grants (CPG) which allows FTA and FHWA planning funds to be processed in one grant. In some situations, GTA is eligible to program Formula 5307 for eligible planning activities as prescribed in C. 9050.1A, whereas the UPWP only indicates 5307 funds will be used for capital and operating expenses. If planning activities are sought using 5307 funds, they should be programmed in the GPATS UPWP.

The UPWP also outlines how GPATS will address performance goals and measures, planning factors, various federal, state, and local initiatives including congestion management, transit improvements, and the movement of freight goods.

Finding: The MPO's UPWP substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.308 with the following recommendation(s):

- Ensure year-end PL reporting includes a description of accomplishments detailing status of product and deliverables outlined in the UPWP.
- In coordination with GTA, develop a process to successfully program funding sources such as 5307 and/or discretionary funding to support planning related activities.

Section VI. Interested Parties (23 CFR 450.316)

A. Outreach and Public Participation

Current Document Title: GPATS 2022 Public Participation Plan (PPP)

Date Adopted: April 2022

Observations: The GPATS 2022 PPP outlines techniques and strategies for the public, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and other interested parties to participate in all transportation processes. Based on discussions at the review meeting, staff has not formally conducted an assessment of

effectiveness of their public engagement efforts related to LRTP and TIP updates in previous years. GPATS will undertake a participation evaluation every three years to incorporate additional outreach strategies with each PPP update.

The GPATS website is one of the many successful strategies used to engage the public. The website provides the public easy access to MPO information, interactive mapping tools, transportation document links, committee meeting agenda & meeting minutes, and opportunities to provide comments.

The GPATS 101 training session is another tool used to educate stakeholders and the public to learn about GPATS and the transportation planning process. The sessions are hybrid and cover a range of topics that are easy to understand.

Finding: The MPO's outreach and public participation activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.316 with the following recommendation(s):

- Assess public involvement practices following LRTP and TIP updates to inform the continued use of current strategies, adoption of new strategies, or discontinued use of strategies for subsequent plan and program updates.

B. Tribal Coordination

Finding: There are no tribal lands within the MPO's planning boundaries requiring the MPO to provide tribal coordination.

C. Title VI and Related Requirements

Current Document Title: GPATS Title VI Plan

Date Adopted: May 2023

Observations: The MPO integrates Title VI into its processes and programs including planning documents and other planning initiatives. A designated staff person serves as the Title VI Manager and is responsible for ensuring implementation and overall administration of the agency's Title VI program, plan, and assurances. The GPATS Title VI program of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 is compliant with all Federal regulations.

Finding: The MPO's Title VI and related activities substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 49 CFR 21, 49 CFR 27, 23 CFR 200, 23 CFR 450.316 and 336(a).

Section VII. Linking Planning and NEPA (23 CFR 450.318, 320, 324(f)(10), 324(g))

Current Document Title: GPATS 2045 LRTP

Date Adopted: November 2022

Observations: The 2045 LRTP was developed in response to the impacts of the 2020 Census on the urbanized area, study area boundary, and subsequent redesignation. The 2045 LRTP reflects the changes in the study area boundary, identifies relevant projects that are removed from the LRTP, and updates the fiscally constrained project priority tables. The remaining analysis, content and planning assumptions from the Horizon 2040 LRTP were validated and carried forward to include with the 2045 LRTP.

The desk audit review of the combined 2045/2040 LRTP found a lack of documentation related to consideration of relevant environmental mitigation activities as stated in 23 CFR.324 (10). As appropriate, the MPO should include a discussion of the types of potential environmental mitigation activities for the transportation improvements and potential areas to carry out these activities, including activities that may have the greatest potential to restore and maintain the environmental functions affected by the plan. The MPO should also consult with the appropriate state and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation and historic preservation by comparing the LRTP with State conservation plans and inventories of natural or historic resources.

Finding: The MPO's substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.324 with the following recommendation(s):

- Document consultation efforts with federal and state resource agencies for the consideration of relevant environmental mitigation strategies.

Section VIII. Congestion Management Process (CMP) (23 CFR 450.322)

Current Document Title: GPATS Congestion Management Process

Date Adopted: October 21, 2024

Observations: Based on the desk audit review and knowledge of the MPO's past practices, the Review Team identified the *Congestion Management Process* as a risk area for the GPATS MPO and was subsequently included as a focused discussion topic during the onsite meeting.

The MPO's 2021 certification review identified a Corrective Action for lacking the following CMP elements:

- Maintaining an ongoing monitoring and evaluation program,
- Establishment of a coordinated program for data collection, and
- Implementation of a process for periodic assessments of effectiveness

In response, GPATS staff participated in a CMP Peer Exchange hosted by FHWA in 2021 to support advancing the state of practice for congestion management in South Carolina. Additionally, SCDOT included GPATS in CMP pilot studies for (3) participating TMAs (COATS, CHATS) to further develop methodologies for congestion management and integration with the Regional Mobility Program (RMP).

The GPATS MPO adopted the current CMP in 2024 consistent with FHWA's 8-step process. The MPO's CMP included a robust public engagement effort to support development of goals and receive feedback on reoccurring congestion and potential strategies. The CMP defines a tiered network and performance measures including peak planning time index, recurrent delay, and safety. Travel mobility data (Iteris) and safety crash data for motorized, non-motorized, and transit are the primary data sources. Network deficiencies are identified for each category of strategy.

The 2024 GPATS CMP provides a more defined process than in previous versions and offers opportunities through implementation to enhance future planning and project analysis. Additional CMP documentation should further define network monitoring efforts, update cycle, estimate of anticipated performance, implementation schedule and responsibilities, funding sources, and post project assessment methodology.

Finding: The MPO's congestion management process substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.322 with the following recommendation(s):

- Develop additional CMP documentation to further define network monitoring efforts, update cycle, estimate of anticipated performance, implementation schedule and responsibilities, funding sources, and post project assessment methodology;
- Reflect annual CMP activities in the UPWP to support an ongoing process;

- Consideration of a CMP MOU with SCDOT and GTA to define roles and responsibilities related to data, strategy analysis, and assessment of effectiveness; and
- Consideration of a statewide working group including SCDOT and TMAs in South Carolina to share best practices.

Section IX. Long Range Transportation Plan (23 CFR 450.324)

A. LRTP

Current Document Title: GPATS 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Date Adopted: November 2022

Observations: The 2045 LRTP was developed in response to the impacts of the 2020 Census on the urbanized area, study area boundary, and subsequent redesignation. The 2045 LRTP reflects the changes in the study area boundary, identifies relevant projects that are removed from the LRTP, and updates the fiscally constrained project priority tables. The remaining analysis, content and planning assumptions from the Horizon 2040 LRTP were validated and carried forward to include with the 2045 LRTP. GPATS released a RFP for consulting services related to the GPATS Horizon2050 LRTP scheduled to be adopted in 2026.

Finding: The GPATS LRTP substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.324 with the following recommendation(s):

- Advance the practice of performance-based planning in future LRTP updates by linking goals, performance measures, and targets to project selection. This can include additional considerations for integrating the congestion management process, the LRTP and the TIP.

B. Travel Demand Modeling/Data

Observations: The GPATS MPO estimates future travel demand using a regional travel demand model managed in partnership with the Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG), the Anderson-Clemson and Spartanburg MPOs and SCDOT's Office of Planning. The approach to utilizing a unified travel demand model is a result of a collaboration among agency partners to more efficiently plan for the region's growth patterns and interconnected travel demand. The GPATS MPO first utilized the regional travel demand model to support the development of the Horizon 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan adopted in 2017.

The regional travel demand model's base year is 2010 and the horizon year is 2045. The model maintenance and use for transportation analysis is accomplished through a professional services contract. The GPATS MPO is responsible for the development of socio-economic data estimates.

Finding: The MPO's travel demand modeling processes substantially satisfy the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.324€ with the following recommendation(s):

- In coordination with the Appalachian Council of Governments, ACATS and SPATS MPOS, and SCDOT develop an MOU to outline roles, responsibilities, and commitments in support of the maintenance and operation of the regional travel demand model.
- Document internal processes for the development and maintenance of baseline and projected socio-economic data.

C. Financial Plan/Fiscal Constraint

Observations: The GPATS LRTP identifies funding revenue sources and Year of Expenditure project costs were inflated to the midpoint of the anticipated horizon year of implementation.

Finding: The financial plan/fiscal constraint of the MPO's LRTP substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.324(f)(11).

Section X. Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) (23 CFR 450.326, 328, 330, 332, 334)

Current Document Title: GPATS 2025-2034 Transportation Improvement Plan

Date Adopted: February 2024

Observations: The 2025-2034 TIP outlines the planning objectives, priority status and funding source for all highway and transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and transportation enhancement projects scheduled for implementation over a ten-year period.

The TIP was developed cooperatively between GPATS and SCDOT with input from the public. The TIP was adopted by the GPATS Policy Committee on February 26, 2024.

Finding: The MPO's TIP substantially satisfies the federal requirements as outlined in 23 CFR 450.326,328, 330, 332, and 334.

Section XI. Findings/Conclusions

The following items represent a compilation of the findings that are included in the 2025 certification review report. These findings, which are identified as noteworthy practices, corrective actions, and recommendations, are intended to not only ensure continuing regulatory compliance of the GPATS MPO's transportation planning process with federal planning requirements, but to also foster high-quality planning practices and improve the transportation planning program in this TMA. No Corrective Actions were identified in the review. Recommendations reflect national trends or potential risks and are intended to assist

the MPO in improving the planning process. Noteworthy practices highlight efforts that demonstrate innovative ideas or best practices for implementing the planning requirements.

A. Noteworthy Practices

- GPATS has consistently committed to regional coordination and collaboration with member jurisdictions, Upstate MPOs and Appalachian Council of Government, transit providers, transportation stakeholders, as well as regional alliances.
- GPATS serves as a training resource and clearinghouse for training and professional development for staff, stakeholders and elected officials. The GPATS 101 training/webinar offers transportation planning related training and development that is user friendly.

B. Corrective Actions

- None

C. Recommendations

- If proposing to flex FHWA funding to FTA in the future and in coordination with SCDOT, develop a process outlining procedures for initiating the transfer of eligible Federal Aid Highway Program Funding to FTA in support of MPO and COG priority projects with a transit nexus.
- Consider the development of an MOU with regional stakeholders to support ongoing freight planning efforts and plan implementation in the region.
- Consider opportunities to further integrate the use of the AASHTOWare Safety application for planning products and processes to advance the MPO's emphasis of improving safety for all modes of transportation. Coordinate with SCDOT to expand the use of the application with local governments within the GPATS planning area to strategically identify opportunities to incorporate FHWA's Proven Safety Countermeasures where appropriate to improve safety measures in the GPATS Study Area.
- Ensure year-end PL reporting includes a description of accomplishments detailing status of product and deliverables outlined in the UPWP.
- In coordination with GTA, develop a process to successfully program funding sources such as 5307 and/or discretionary funding to support planning related activities.
- Assess public involvement practices following LRTP and TIP updates to inform the continued use of current strategies, adoption of new strategies, or discontinued use of strategies for subsequent plan and program updates.
- Document consultation efforts with federal and state resource agencies for the consideration of relevant environmental mitigation strategies.
- Develop additional CMP documentation to further define network monitoring efforts, update cycle, estimate of anticipated performance, implementation schedule and

responsibilities, funding sources, and post project assessment methodology; document ongoing and future staff activities in the UPWP to support the CMP; consider a CMP MOU with SCDOT and GTA to define roles and responsibilities related to data, strategy analysis, and assessment of effectiveness; and in coordination with SCDOT, assess benefits of initiating statewide CMP working group to support peer learning and advance the state of practice.

- Advance the practice of performance-based planning in future LRTP updates by linking goals, performance measures, and targets to project selection. This can include additional considerations for integrating the congestion management process, the LRTP and the TIP.
- In coordination with the Appalachian Council of Governments, ACATS, SPATS, and SCDOT develop an MOU to outline roles, responsibilities, and commitments in support of the maintenance and operation of the regional travel demand model. Document internal processes for the development and maintenance of baseline and projected socio-economic data.

D. Training/Technical Assistance

GPATS staff indicated training needs related to Local Public Agency (LPA) certification.

E. Conclusion

Based on the overall findings of the certification review, the FHWA and FTA jointly certify that the transportation planning process of the GPATS MPO, substantially meets the federal planning requirements in 23 CFR 450 Subpart C. This certification will remain in effect until November 18, 2029.

Appendix A. GPATS Certification Review Participants

The following individuals were involved in the GPATS Urbanized Area hybrid review:

Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration:

- Mark Pleasant
- David Cook
- Yolanda Lott
- John Crocker
- Mack Frost
- Faith Hall

South Carolina Department of Transportation:

Leah Quattlebaum
Diane Lackey
Eugene Taylor
Erin Queen
David Gray

Greenville Pickens Area Transportation Study:

- Keith Brockington
- Draper Carlile
- Cleo Hill
- Asangwua Ikein
- Anna Stewart

Greenlink:

- James Keel
- William Flake
- Heather Lollis
- Kat Moreland

Appendix B. TMA Certification Site Visit Agenda

Greenville Pickens Area Transportation Study (GPATS) Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification Meeting
 September 22, 2025
 12:00 P.M. - 5:00 P.M.

SITE REVIEW AGENDA

Agency Representation Invitees			
FHWA	FTA – Region IV	SCDOT	MPO and Transit Provider
➤ David Cook ➤ Yolanda Lott ➤ Erin McCarley ➤ James Moye ➤ Mark Pleasant ➤ Faith Hall ➤ Mack Frost	➤ John Crocker	➤ David Gray ➤ Brian Klauk ➤ Diane Lackey ➤ Crystal McCutcheon ➤ Renee Miller-Colton ➤ Jennifer Necker ➤ Leah Quattlebaum ➤ Erin Queen ➤ Angela Page Smith ➤ Gene Taylor ➤ Jim Walden ➤ Sherm Young	➤ Keith Brockington ➤ Draper Carlile ➤ Cleo Hill ➤ Asangwua Ikein ➤ Anna Stewart ➤ William Flake ➤ James Keel ➤ Heather Lollis ➤ Kat Moreland
ON SITE INFORMATION: Greenville Transit Authority Board & Community Room 205 Arcadia Drive GTA Operations & Maintenance Facility Greenville, SC 29609			
VIRTUAL MEETING INFORMATION: • Federal Review, 12pm-5pm ○ https://us06web.zoom.us/j/86956308015?pwd=WbG9MQTlNmI5qGTY5nMUbPia3cwrD.1 ○ Meeting ID: 869 5630 8015 ○ Passcode: 715964 • Public Meeting, 5:30pm-7pm ○ https://us06web.zoom.us/j/83062014264?pwd=aw5eB2ealQ3jYcXsbDOIVEnAwNm7b.1 ○ Meeting ID: 830 6201 4264 ○ Passcode: 386452			
TIME	ITEMS/TOPIC AREAS	LEAD FACILITATOR	
Start time 12:00 P.M.	Welcome/Introductions	FHWA	
	➤ Purpose of the Certification Process, Schedule, and Close Out Process		
	Overview of the GPATS MPO	MPO	
	➤ MPO Overview, Staff, and Structure ➤ Recent Accomplishments		

	➤ Current Initiatives and Process Improvements	FHWA/MPO
	Status of Previous & Current Findings	
	➤ Review of Previous Findings with Status Updates	
	Transit	FTA/Transit Providers
	➤ Provider Achievements ➤ Agency Coordination ➤ Current Activities and Funding Needs ➤ Performance Based Planning and Programming	
10 minutes	Break	
	Planning Topic Area Discussion ➤ Safety ➤ CMP ➤ LRTP	
Conclude 5:00 P.M.	Preliminary Findings Discussion with FHWA, FTA & MPO Next Steps	FHWA/FTA
5:30 P.M. – 7:00 P.M.	Public Input Session	FHWA/FTA/MPO

Appendix C. Public Engagement Notice

NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION Greenville-Pickens Area Transportation Study Opportunity for Public Review and Comment

The Greenville-Pickens Area Transportation Study will hold a public meeting in conjunction with the Federal Highway and Federal Transit Administrations as part of its Recertification process on Monday, September 22, 2025.

The purpose of this meeting is to discuss the Greenville metropolitan area's transportation planning process and the effectiveness of that process.

The meeting will be held at 205 Arcadia Drive, Greenville, SC 29609 **5:30 – 7:00 p.m.** with limited seating available. Virtual attendance is available by request at gpats@greenvillecountv.org. For additional information, contact Keith Brockington, Transportation Manager, at (864) 467-7143; in person at Greenville County Planning Department, 301 University Ridge, Suite S-3200, Greenville, SC 29601; or email kbrockington@greenvillecountv.org.

Written comments may be sent to Mark Pleasant at the Federal Highway Administration, 1835 Assembly St., Suite 1270, Columbia, SC 29201. Written comments will be received through October 22, 2025.

Notice of assistance at public meetings: Persons with disabilities who plan to attend this meeting and who may need assistance, such as a sign language interpreter, are requested to contact Mark Pleasant by e-mail at mark.pleasant@dot.gov seven days prior to the meeting so appropriate arrangements can be made.

Appendix D. Status of Previous Certification Findings

Findings from the previous GPATS TMA Certification Review conducted August 24, 2021:

Corrective Actions

The review team identified the following corrective actions that the GPATS MPO must take to comply with Federal Regulations:

Corrective Actions

- Update the PL agreement between the GPATS MPO and SCDOT. The current agreement was executed on January 9, 2014. Per 23 CFR 450.314 SCDOT is required to have an agreement that includes the designated financial agent, the most recent legislation, clauses, regulations (including applicable references to 2 CFR Part 200 (Uniform Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards)) and clarified roles and performance requirements. In addition, the MOU for performance management as cited in 23 CFR 450.314(h)(1) should be included with the PL agreement.

Status: SCDOT has been working with all MPOs to update the PL Agreements. GPATS/Greenville County has submitted a fully signed version back to SCDOT (provided with documents) for their final signatures and execution. SCDOT has not included Performance Measures in the Agreement, but GPATS can help with an Addendum if desired.

- Comply with 23 CFR 450.322 which requires the establishment of a coordinated program for data collection and implementation of an ongoing monitoring process for the CMP. The review team found that GPATS does not have a monitoring and evaluation process outside of the scheduled CMP updates. GPATS should coordinate with SCDOT and engage their transportation partners to formalize a data collection and monitoring program.

Status: GPATS completed its most recent CMP in 2024 (provided with documents) through a pilot program with SCDOT. This CMP developed monitoring and evaluation processes that are to be further developed in the Long-Range Transportation Plan that will be underway in 2026. As the CMP will be the starting point for the LRTP, it made more sense to further develop the monitoring and evaluation with the LRTP which also requires the same.

Recommendations

The review team offered the following recommendations for the 2021 Certification Review that would improve the transportation planning process:

- Finalize MOU for regional transportation coordination with the Upstate MPOs and Appalachian Council of Governments by defining planning roles, responsibilities, and collaborative opportunities.

Status: This was put on hold due to the 2020 Census changes but is still a desired outcome.

- Expand 4th Quarter PL reporting to encompass the status of the quarter as well as a year-end status of activities, accomplishments and products in comparison to deliverables described in the UPWP.

Status: Incomplete at this time.

- Document the 10 national planning factors in the MPO's transportation planning process by including resiliency, travel and tourism, and security. The degree of consideration for each planning factor should be based on the scale and complexity unique to each planning area.

Status: Incomplete at this time due to not having a full LRTP done since the last Review, and the 5-year Update not upending the ranking system. These factors will be included in the LRTP conducted in 2026.

- Advance the practice of performance-based planning in future LRTP updates by linking goals, performance measures, and targets to project selection. This can include additional considerations for integrating the congestion management process, the LRTP and the TIP.

Status: The performance measures currently impact our project selection through weighting of SC-114-approved criteria. The goals and targets have not yet been utilized to modify the weights, but that is something that will be considered in the LRTP conducted in 2026. The consideration of integrating the CMP into the LRTP and TIP was what led to the CMP being done prior to the upcoming LRTP, so it can serve as the beginning of project selection and prioritization, not done separately at the end.

- Provide SCDOT, FHWA, and FTA quarterly updates on the progress of updating the LRTP. A lapse of the current LRTP would potentially impact the ability to amend/modify the TIP. The updated LRTP is due November 2022.

Status: The GPATS Horizon2045 LRTP was successfully updated and approved by GPATS in November of 2022.

- Coordinate with SCDOT to facilitate transit provider access to previous STIPs to support authorization requests to FTA. Clemson Area Transit and GTA indicated challenges associated with authorizing transit grants based on year of award shown in previously approved STIPs.

Status: GPATS continues to work with SCDOT on TIP and STIP coordination. To GPATS understanding, they have improved the process greatly and have not had issues with GTA or CATbus authorizing their formula funds.

- Add documentation to the TIP to reflect methodology used for estimating Year of Expenditure (YOE) project estimates.

Status: Incomplete, as funding levels in the STIP do not use YOE estimates. It remains an option, but GPATS indicated they would prefer not to confuse TIP readers with TIP YOE amounts and STIP current-year amounts.

- Coordinate with SCDOT to transfer Federal-Aid Funds to FTA that have been identified in the TIP for transit capital projects.

Status: GPATS has successfully worked with SCDOT to \$2.021 million of Federal-Aid and SC Match to support a Greenlink Capital RAISE Grant.

- Reevaluate the current Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) process to consider efficiencies to improve project delivery including a bi-annual call for projects to better align with project development and reporting cycles.

Status: GPATS is currently still on a single annual call for projects, as our current number of recurring applicants is low. GPATS is looking to improve efficiencies with an in-house LPA Coordinator to assist applying entities and continue to work with SCDOT on improving the TAP and LPA Processes.

- Complete the yearly assessment of effectiveness based on define metrics in the PPP.

Status: The PPP annual assessment has not been completed.

- Update the PPP to include a process description for using virtual public meetings to conduct MPO business.

Status: The PPP was updated in 2022 to define the virtual public meeting process.

Appendix E Acronyms List

ACATS: Anderson/Clemson Area Transportation Study
ADA: Americans with Disabilities Act
ANATS: Anderson Area Transportation Study
CFR: Code of Federal Regulations
CMP: Congestion Management Process
DOT: Department of Transportation
DR: Designated Recipient
EPA: Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA: Federal Highway Administration
FTA: Federal Transit Administration
FTA 5307: Urbanized Area Formula Funding program
FTA 5310: Capital Assistance Program
FTA 5311: Formula Grants for Rural Areas
FY: Fiscal Year
GPATS: Greenville-Pickens Area Transportation Study
HSIP: Highway Safety Improvement Program
ITS: Intelligent Transportation Systems
LPA: Local Public Agency
LRTP: Metropolitan Transportation Plan
MOA: Memorandum of Agreement
MOU: Memorandum of Understanding
MPA: Metropolitan Planning Area
MPO: Metropolitan Planning Organization
PL: Metropolitan Planning Funds
SCDOT: South Carolina Department of Transportation
SHSP: Strategic Highway Safety Plan
SPATS: Spartanburg Area Transportation Study
STIP: Statewide Transportation Improvement Program
TDM: Travel Demand Management
TIP: Transportation Improvement Program
TMA: Transportation Management Area
U.S.C.: United States Code
UPWP: Unified Planning Work Program
USDOT: United States Department of Transportation
UZA: Urbanized Area
VMT: Vehicle Miles Traveled



Report prepared by:

South Carolina FHWA Division Office

1835 Assembly Street Suite 1270

Columbia, SC 29201

803-765-5411