

MINUTES
GPATS POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
August 15, 2022
10:00 a.m.
Suite 400 – County Square
Remote participation by Committee members

MEMBERS PRESENT: Senator Loftis, Representative Burns, Representative Collins, Representative Cox, Representative Smith, Council Chair Meadows, Councilor Saitta, Councilor Seman, Commissioner Christopher, Commissioner Metcalf, GTA Chair Smith, Mayor Danner, Mayor McLeer, Mayor Merritt, Mayor Perry, Mayor Sanders, Mayor White, Mayor Womack, and Keith Brockington

OTHERS PRESENT: H. Gamble, A. Stewart, A. Ikein, E. Hailey, A. Bodner L. Mehserle, T. Holcombe, M. DiPietro, S. Jackson, P. Butler, T. Coker, S. Limbaker, G. Sprague, P. Phillips, E. Dillon, J. Chandler, and IS Staff

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Acting Chairman Representative Smith called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and welcomed everyone in attendance.

He welcomed Max Metcalf, SCDOT Commissioner for the Fourth Congressional District to GPATS Policy Committee.

PUBLIC COMMENT

Ms. Joel Ann Chandler spoke about the condition of the bridge over I-385 on Bridges Road. The bridge is in poor condition and leads to a school.

She also spoke about a U-Turn Yield to Right Turn sign at the intersection of Bridges Road and Butler Road. She believes this sign is unsafe for the area and will cause crashes.

SCDOT GPATS PROJECT STATUS UPDATE:

Erica Hailey, Assistant Program Manager with the SCDOT, addressed the Committee members with a brief project update presentation included in the agenda packets:

- Upcoming Projects
 - Town of Central Connector is a Transportation Alternatives (TA) Project. SCDOT received the executed financial participation agreement (FPA) from the Town of Central. Design will begin soon.
- Projects in Design
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) Project preliminary right-of-way plans have been received and are being reviewed by the SCDOT

- design team. Right-of-way obligation is anticipated to begin in December 2022.
 - S-107 Butler Road Project preliminary right-of-way plans are in review. Right-of-way obligation is scheduled to occur in fall 2022.
 - Riverside Middle School Sidewalk and Fountain Inn Woodside Connector Projects have completed design. The municipalities are interested in applying for more funding in order to move these projects under construction.
 - Fountain Inn Woodside Streetscape Project was let in May 2022. No acceptable bids were received. Scope revisions will be forthcoming.
- Guideshare Projects in construction in the GPATS area are as follows:
 - S-164 Batesville Road Widening Project has an anticipated completion of October 2022. The completion date was delayed due to traffic signal supply shortages.
 - SC-146 Woodruff Road Widening Project has an anticipated completion date of September 2022.
 - Concrete work for curb and gutter, sidewalks, and driveways is ongoing.
 - The contractor is placing and leveling asphalt along Woodruff Road and Scuffletown Road.
 - Roper Mtn Road (RMR)/Roper Mtn Road Extension (RMRE) anticipated completion date is May 2023.
 - Contractor paved left of the centerline and shifted traffic to prepare to start work on Phase I of the new bridge.
 - Drainage pipe installation continues on RMR.
- Non-Guideshare Bridge Replacement projects were as follows:
 - S-75 Cherokee Road over US 29 anticipated completion date is June 2024. Preparations for the mechanically stabilized earth (MSE) wall have begun. Buildup for roundabout, storm drain installation, clearing and grubbing, and the contract water line relocation are all currently underway.
 - S-140 over Shoal Creek and S-250 over Doddies Creek are anticipated to be completed in June 2023. Both bridges are currently closed with new alignments being installed.

Ms. Hailey made herself available for any questions.

Acting Chairman Smith asked about the West Georgia Rd (S-272) Improvements Project right-of-way obligation being shifted to May 2022 and if there were any updates on the project.

Ms. Hailey responded the budget for this project stalled when the right-of-way estimate was received due to financial constraints. Scope revisions will be forthcoming to accommodate the budget.

SAFE STREETS FOR ALL (SS4A) GRANT OPPORTUNITY

Asangwua Ikein addressed the members with a presentation on the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant included in the agenda packets:

Mr. Ikein advised this Federal Discretionary Grant is to protect vulnerable roadway users. The grant has a five-year horizon and can be coupled with other projects, or used as a job training program. A 20% local match must be provided, and federal funding cannot be used as a local match. Action Plan and Implementation Plan are the two types of grants applicants can apply for. Applicants cannot apply for both. The due date for this grant is September 15, 2022 at 5pm EDT. This grant is ongoing, and there will be an opportunity to apply in the coming years.

Mr. Ikein explained when applying for an Action Grant, an elected body must commit and set policies towards meeting the grant obligations. Also, there must be a committee monitoring the process of the grant.

Mr. Ikein defined arterials and collectors as the most dangerous types of roads. They make up approximately 18% of total roadways in the GPATS region, while accounting for approximately 70% of all traffic incidents.

According to Smart Growth America, the Greenville-Anderson-Mauldin Metro Area is ranked as the 17th most dangerous area to walk in the country. The area continues to become more dangerous for people walking. South Carolina is the third most dangerous state in the country. As vehicles increase in size, injuries sustained from crashes become more serious. He explained this grant is designed to promote strategies that will improve safety over a wide geographic area.

Mr. Ikein discussed the elements of the Complete Streets Design Model. These elements are as follows:

- Safety
- Connectivity
- Accessibility
- Equity Performance
- Research and Guidance
- Funding for Infrastructure Investments
- Context-Sensitive Design and Design Flexibility

Mr. Ikein explained separate Action Plan Grant applications for similar jurisdiction areas are permitted. However, duplicative Action Plan Grant requests will be flagged during the application review process. Joint applications are encouraged, but not required.

Mr. Ikein made himself available for any questions.

Mayor White, with the City of Greenville, asked for clarification on the maximum amount of funds that can be applied for.

Mr. Ikein replied the maximum amount for an Action Plan Grant is \$5 million and the maximum amount for an Implementation Plan Grant is \$50 million.

Mayor White asked if a project has to remain in one place or if it could be more systemic.

Mr. Ikein replied projects can be stationary or systemic in order to apply for funding. Applicants are encouraged to create a list of projects to be completed. The only constraint will be the amount of funds available.

Mayor Merritt, with the City of Mauldin, asked for clarification about the report on US 25 White Horse Road which was presented at the March Policy Committee Meeting. The report covered pedestrian deaths when crossing the road. He asked if there was data showing where in the road pedestrians were crossing when they were hit.

Mr. Ikein replied there was data available and he would follow up with the specifics.

Mayor Merritt asked if South Carolina State Law still stated drivers must stop before turning right at a red light.

Representative Smith said he believes this law is still active.

Keith Brockington said at a slip lane drivers do not have to stop, because it is a yield. Slip lanes are currently being phased out due to a number of accidents caused by them.

Mayor Merritt recommended an education training program so the public can better understand the rules of the road.

Senator Loftis, with Greenville County Legislative Delegation, remarked some individuals do not know how to navigate roundabouts. He asked for clarification on roundabout safety data.

Mr. Brockington responded generally roundabouts improve safety. Roundabouts have approximately a 70% reduction in crashes resulting in injury, and a 100% reduction in crashes resulting in fatality.

Senator Loftis asked if an application has to be cumulative if GPATS, City of Greenville, and City of Greer applied for the grant.

Mr. Ikein responded if multiple cities in the same MPO are applying, the federal government prefers for one application to be submitted through the MPO.

Pamela Christopher, SCDOT Commissioner for the Third Congressional District, asked who reviews the applications that are submitted.

Mr. Ikein responded the MPO makes the application. The MPO then coordinates with local entities to make sure the application is satisfactory. The federal government reviews and evaluates the applications.

Mayor McLeer, with the City of Fountain Inn, remarked more conversation is needed so the region will get the most impact from these grants.

Mr. Ikein remarked if only one municipality in the region wishes to apply, it may not be necessary to go through the MPO. However, if multiple municipalities wish to apply it is best to go through the MPO.

Max Metcalf, SCDOT Commissioner for the Fourth Congressional District, asked if there needs to be some commonality between the projects the municipalities wish to complete on a joint application through the MPO.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Ikein responded that a conversation would need to happen between municipalities to prioritize common projects when applying.

Mayor Danner, with the City of Greer, remarked the application due date is in less than a month, so municipalities do not have time to apply this year.

Mr. Ikein responded this presentation was for informational purposes and to prepare applicants for next year.

Mayor Danner suggested forming a subcommittee to determine the focus for the grant application.

After a brief discussion, Mr. Ikein suggested a survey could be used to receive public input on how funds should be spent.

GPATS HORIZON2045 LONG-RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN STATUS UPDATE

Keith Brockington addressed members with a status update for the Horizon2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan Update. The presentation was included in the agenda packets:

Mr. Brockington said the Horizon2045 Update will be a bare minimum update. The Travel Model has been updated, but the full update will not occur until later this year, due to the availability of census data. The MetroQuest survey can be found on the GPATS website, and will remain open until August 30th. GPATS completed 7 public input meetings in July. In total, 74 people participated in the public engagement sessions.

Mr. Brockington encouraged everyone to share the MetroQuest survey. There have been 237 responses to the survey thus far. Overall trends show that the Safety and Security category is ranking first most often. The Economic Vitality category is ranking

last. Responses also indicate most improvements are needed along roadways. More in depth analysis on the data will be forthcoming.

Mr. Brockington advised GPATS staff are in the process of analyzing and ranking projects. Development of the Draft Plan will begin soon. GPATS staff anticipates presenting the Draft Plan to stakeholders before the Study Team meeting in September. Adoption of the Plan is anticipated for the September Study Team meeting and the October Policy Committee meeting. He advised GPATS is required to adopt this plan before the end of 2022.

Mr. Brockington encouraged members to share the MetroQuest survey on social media.

Mr. Brockington made himself available for any questions.

Mayor Merritt encouraged GPATS to schedule public meetings at a different time in the future, so vacations will not hinder attendance.

NEW BUSINESS

Keith Brockington spoke on the GPATS Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program. GPATS is currently accepting Letters of Intent for jurisdictions that wish to apply for TA funding. TA Program funds are dedicated towards bicycle and pedestrian projects. SCDOT is in the process of reevaluating the TA Program. Thus, applications are not being accepted at this time. GPATS has approximately \$1.3 million in TA funding, and only one Letter of Intent has been received thus far.

Mr. Brockington advised any GPATS jurisdiction that is interested in applying for TA Program funding should submit a Letter of Intent to Anna Stewart by August 31st, 2022. The Letter of Intent should include details about the project and the funding requested.

Mr. Brockington spoke on the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5310 Grant Final Call for Projects. GPATS has approximately \$400,000 that will lapse by the end of September. GPATS is making a final call for projects to avoid a lapse of funds.

Anyone who is interested in applying should contact Asangwua Ikein.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Without objection Acting Chairman Representative Smith adjourned the meeting at 11:07 a.m.

Anna Stewart

Submitted by Recording Secretary