

MINUTES
GPATS POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE
October 18, 2021
Suite 400 – County Square – with limited seating
Remote participation by Committee members
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Vice-Chairman Senator Rice, Senator Allen, Senator Cash, Senator Loftis, Representative Burns, Representative Smith, Council Chair Meadows, Councilor Saitta, Councilor Seman, Commissioner Christopher, Commissioner Willard, GTA Chair O’Neill, Mayor Amidon, Mayor Danner, Mayor Halfacre, Mayor McLeer, Mayor Merritt, Mayor Petersen, Mayor Sanders, Mayor Shewmaker, Mayor Womack, Ruth Sherlock, and Keith Brockington

OTHERS PRESENT: P. Gucker, T. Coker, B. Groel, A. Ikein, D. Montgomery, C. Lewis, H. Gamble, C. Lucas, S. Jackson-Amell, J. Chandler, E. Dillon, P. Butler, D. Bates, D. Fall, B. Helsel, and A. Garrett

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Vice-Chairman Senator Rice called the meeting to order at 10:04 a.m.

Vice-Chairman Senator Rice informed the Committee Butch Kirven is no longer serving on the GPATS Policy Committee. He stated Mr. Kirven’s service would be missed. He advised Mr. Kirven had served on the GPATS board since 2009, then became Chairman in 2013. He thanked Mr. Kirven for his many years of service to the community. He informed members an election will be held in March 2022 for Chairman to complete the remainder of the term.

Vice-Chairman Senator Rice stated he will continue as the interim. If he can be of assistance to anyone, please let him know.

APPROVAL OF THE AUGUST 16, 2021 COMMITTEE MEETING

MOTION: By Mayor Petersen, seconded by Senator Allen, to approve the minutes of the August 16, 2021 Committee meeting as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

PUBLIC COMMENT

There were no individuals signed up for public comment.

SCDOT PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Casey Lucas addressed the Committee with a brief project updates presentation included in the agenda packets:

- Guideshare Projects in construction in the GPATS area are as follows:
 - Batesville Road's current plan is to place the surface on the main line from the bridge to the end of the project before winter. Wall 2 shoring is complete and is awaiting on wall contractor. The old Batesville bridge demolition has begun with an anticipated completion of four weeks.
 - Woodruff Road Widening progress is slow as the contractor manages utility and COVID setbacks. Grading continues, and traffic has been shifted on Woodruff Road.
 - Roper Mtn Road/Roper Mtn Road Extension relocation work continues. It is estimated Charter will be relocated by October 15th and Century Link by November 1st.
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (Woodruff Road Parallel) estimating the surveying to finish in fall 2021 with right-of-way plans to proceed after surveying is completed.
 - SC-153 Intersection Improvements are complete, with final inspection tentatively scheduled for November 2022.
 - Butler Road's Preferred Alternative is being refined. SCDOT, along with the City of Mauldin, to schedule an additional public involvement meeting in the fall or winter.

- Non-Guideshare Projects in the GPATS area are as follows:
 - West Georgia Road Improvements' preliminary design is being revised due to resident feedback from the public meeting held in July 2021.

- Bridge projects in the GPATS area are as follows:
 - S-75 Cherokee Road over US-29
 - S-154 Over Huff Creek
 - S-140 over Shoal Creek
 - S-250 over Doddies Creek
 - S-125 over Saluda River

- Transportation Alternative Program (TAP)
 - Woodside Park Connector's construction plans are in development, and the let date has shifted to June 2022 to allow time for environmental permit acquisition

Ms. Lucas made herself available for any questions.

Representative Smith asked what SCDOT is waiting for on the Butler Road project

Ms. Lucas responded SCDOT is not waiting on anything, and the project is still moving forward. She advised a contract modification was needed for PE services and is in process but has not been executed.

Mayor Merritt of Mauldin asked if there was anything the City of Mauldin could do to help excel the Butler Road project.

Ms. Lucas replied the right-of-way process could be completed faster, and its time is an estimate. She advised with the extensive amount of public involvement and stakeholder engagement SCDOT has for the Butler Road project, it could be completed sooner than anticipated.

PERFORMANCE MEASURES UPDATE

Brennan Groel addressed the Committee with Performance Target Amendments to the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) documents. The date changes reflect the expected Policy Committee adoption date of October 18, 2021, and SCDOT's adoption date of August 31, 2021. She advised there are new Statewide Safety Targets with baseline data taken from 2016 to 2020. She reviewed the South Carolina Baseline, South Carolina Targets, and GPATS Baseline for the following:

- Traffic Fatalities
- Fatality Rate
- Severe Injuries
- Severe Injuries Rate
- Non-motorized

Ms. Groel provided Greenlink Transit Safety Targets also included with this amendment. She reviewed the Mode of Transit Service for Fixed Route and Demand Response/Paratransit for the following:

- Fatalities Total
- Fatality Rate
- Injuries Total
- Injury Rate
- Safety Events Total
- Safety Even Rate
- System Reliability

MOTION: By Representative Smith, seconded by Mayor Womack, to approve the Long-Range Transportation Plan Amendment as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

MOTION: By Representative Smith, seconded by Mayor Womack, to approve the Transportation Improvement Program Document Amendment as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

SCDOT COMPLETE STREETS PRESENTATION

Christina Lewis, Statewide Chief Planner with SCDOT, addressed Committee with a presentation on the SCDOT Complete Streets Directive 28 approved in February 2021. This presentation was included in the agenda packets. SCDOT will be working with MPOs, COGs, and Regional Transit Providers to document walking, bicycling, and transit needs on targeted routes as part of their regional bike/ped plans. The Engineering Directive 22 also suggests bicycling accommodations be considered as part of the annual pavement improvement program and be presented to the Commission for approval in late spring to early summer. She advised eligibility requirements for bike/ped be included within East Coast Greenway, SC Bicycling Touring Routes, or part of an MPO/COG plan. The SCDOT Office of Planning will coordinate with the MPOs and COGs to ensure they create bike accommodation plans to serve as a basis for integrating bicycling into the state roadway system. The SCDOT Maintenance Office will review the approved MPO and COG bicycling accommodation plans and cross-reference them with the approved Pavement Improvement Program to identify candidate projects for the inclusion of bike accommodations. The accommodations must be achieved within the scope of the pavement improvement project without requiring right-of-way, permitting, or utilities.

Ms. Lewis stated the Bicycling Eligibility Accommodations are:

- Shoulder Sections - construction of a four-foot paved shoulder beyond the rumble strips.
- Curb & Gutter Sections - will evaluate the existing footprint based on the design manual. This option does not include reducing the number of lanes.
- All Sections - pavement markings and signage as determined appropriate by the District Traffic Engineer.

Ms. Lewis stated the new Complete Streets Directive takes a multimodal approach to their practices and establishes guidelines for the inclusion of walking, bicycling, and transit accommodations on projects undertaken by the Department and other entities performing work on the state-owned highway system. The goal is to ensure South Carolina highways are safe, equitable, and accessible to all users; drivers, passengers, bicyclists, pedestrians, and transit riders.

Complete Street Directive was as follows:

- South Carolina has the highest fatality rate in the nation.
- Approximately 1,000 fatalities on South Carolina Highways every year.
- Pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities account for approximately 18% of the total number of fatalities.

Since the last Strategic Highway Safety Plan update:

- Pedestrian fatalities have increased by 54%.
- Bicycle fatalities have increased by 57%.
- This is not only a South Carolina trend is also a national trend.

There are two requirements:

- Consideration of accommodations for bicycling, walking, and transit.
- SCDOT to work with the State's Regional Transportation Planning Partners and Regional Transit Providers to identify and include these accommodations as part of their regional development plans.

Ms. Lewis stated funding for these accommodations is to be included in the budget for each project if warranted on the project. SCDOT has updated and modernized its design manuals to include multimodal accommodations and has established a council to facilitate ongoing communication to seek continuous improvement opportunities and initiatives.

Ms. Lewis reviewed the seven elements of the Complete Street Directive

- Funding
- Design
- Work Zone Traffic Control
- Maintenance
- Safety & Operations
- Plan Development
- Complete Streets Council

Ms. Lewis presented the Funding Element table. She advised Safety Projects may not always be appropriate for the inclusion of walking, bicycling, and transit accommodations due to the limited scope of these projects. The Local Option Sales Tax Programs will be in accordance with the referendums for projects authorized by the voters if implemented prior to the effective date of the Complete Streets Directive. She stated the Roadway Design manual has been updated. SCDOT has integrated design publications for bike/ped accommodations to include AASHTO Policy and Design, FHWA manuals and is open to adopting other manuals or ideas.

Ms. Lewis stated Work Zone Traffic Control plans have to address all modes of transportation currently being accommodated. The SCDOT Maintenance Element has a list of standards for walking, bicycling, and transit accommodations designed by the SCDOT Roadway Design Manual unless previously addressed with a specific maintenance agreement. SCDOT will not maintain specially designed items or paths that do not follow traffic lanes.

The Maintenance Element includes:

- Sidewalks (Concrete)
- Sidepaths (Concrete)
- Bicycle Lanes
- Paved Shoulders
- Shared Roadways
- Shared Lanes
- Bus pads installed and owned by SCDOT (Concrete)

- Bus turnouts adjacent to the travel lane
- Pavement markings and signage related to these accommodation installed and owned by SCDOT

Ms. Lewis advised SCDOT will provide safety and operational resources. She stated SCDOT is creating a Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Action Plan in response to South Carolina not meeting its Safety Target. She advised South Carolina is not alone, for fifty-eight percent of states did not meet their Targets.

Goals for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Action Plan are:

- Increase the understanding of bicycling and walking crash patterns
- Promote objectives and data-driven decision making
- Promote investment in proven safety countermeasures
- Target locations with high needs and opportunities for successful outcomes

Ms. Lewis expressed the SCDOT will continue to coordinate with MPOs and COGs to develop an interactive map of existing plans. She acknowledged GPATS has begun this process for these appear on the map. SCDOT will be hiring a consultant to assist with developing these plans by using best practices currently being used throughout the state and nation. She advised each area will have its own Bike and Pedestrian plan, which will then be pieced together for the statewide Bike and Pedestrian Plan. She estimates this to take three years to complete.

Ms. Lewis advised the Complete Streets Council panel is composed of SCDOT Staff, MPO/COG Staff, Local Government, and External Stakeholders. The first meeting was held in May 2021, and the next meeting will be in November 2021. Ms. Lewis stated Keith Brockington is one of the MPO Representatives on Complete Streets Council. She advised GPATS has added projects to the mapping application and will be required to develop a Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Ms. Lewis made herself available for any questions.

A question was asked how much the multimodal accommodations would cost.

Ms. Lewis answered she would gather information prior to the next Policy Committee meeting.

GPATS 2022 MEETING SCHEDULE

Keith Brockington reviewed with the Committee the schedule for Calendar Year 2022, as each received in their packets.

Mayor Merritt of Mauldin inquired about the first meeting being held in March 2022 instead of February and how most of the meetings are on a Monday three weeks after the Study Team.

Mr. Brockington stated there was a scheduling conflict with President's Day on the third Monday in February and availability for the room these meetings are held in.

MOTION: By Representative Smith, seconded by Representative Burns, to approve the GPATS 2022 meeting schedule as presented. The motion carried unanimously by voice vote.

NEW BUSINESS

Keith Brockington addressed the Committee that GPATS has issued a 5310 Call for Projects. Funding of \$879,533 is available from Federal Transit Authority (FTA) Section 5310. This opportunity is for transit service providers offering service for the Elderly, Disabled, and Job Access. GPATS is advertising to solicit applicants until January 14, 2022, with the intent to bring a recommendation to the Study Team in January for March approval by the Policy Committee. Anyone interested in applying contact Asangwua Ikein or visit www.gpats.org for application guidelines.

SCDOT Commissioner Christopher agreed with Vice-Chairman Senator Rice's earlier comments regarding the work Mr. Kirven did for GPATS. She suggested Committee members consider nominating Vice-Chairman Senator Rice for Chairman in the upcoming GPATS election.

Vice-Chairman Senator Rice thanked SCDOT Commissioner Christopher for her support. He advised, if the Committee members wanted to nominate him as Chairman at the upcoming election, they would also need to consider a nomination for Vice-Chairman.

Mayor Danner of Greer suggested a tribute be considered for the next Policy Committee meeting to acknowledge former Chairman Kirven to show their appreciation for his many years of service with GPATS.

Vice-Chairman Senator Rice agreed.

SCDOT Commissioner Christopher inquired if Mayor Halfacre received information regarding Highway 93 scope and cost for the project.

Keith Brockington advised he has been in contact with Mayor Halfacre. GPATS will be assisting the City of Clemson with their application for the new year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) carryover funds.

Mayor Halfacre of Clemson confirmed he has been speaking with Mr. Brockington regarding receiving information the City of Clemson will need for the Highway 93 project.

ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: By Mayor Merritt, seconded by Representative Smith, to adjourn. There being no further business, and without objection, Vice-Chairman Senator Rice adjourned the meeting at 10:44 a.m.


Submitted by Recording Secretary