

MINUTES
GPATS STUDY TEAM COMMITTEE
September 27, 2021
Suite 400 – County Square – with limited seating
Remote participation by members
10:00 a.m.

MEMBERS PRESENT: Chris Brink, Keith Brockington, Jon Caime, Michael Calvert, Tee Coker, Lance Estep, David Dyrhaug, Heshia Gamble, Sammy Grant, Brennan Groel, Paula Gucker, Erica Hailey, Valerie Holmes, Asangwua Ikein, Ashley Kaade, Diane Lackey, Christina Lewis, Skip Limbaker, Heather Lollis, Casey Lucas, Betsy McCall, Liston Mehserle, Laura Merritt, Renee Miller-Cotton, Erin Porter, Dyke Spencer, Todd Steadman and Ryan Ward

OTHERS PRESENT: Senator Rice, D. Beaty, P. Butler, D. Montgomery, D. Falls, J. Mustar, B. Helsel, A. Garrett, R. Pinckney, and E. Dillion

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME

Keith Brockington called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m.

Keith Brockington welcomed all in attendance.

SCDOT GPATS PROJECT STATUS UPDATE

Casey Lucas, Program Manager with the SCDOT, addressed members with a brief status update on projects within the GPATS area.

- Projects in construction were as follows:
 - S-164 Batesville Road Widening drainage, grading, and paving continues. Traffic was switched to the new alignment in mid-August to the new bridge over Rocky Creek, where work continues with the new walls.
 - SC-146 Woodruff Road Widening progress has slowed along Shuffletown Road as the contractor manages utility setbacks. Grading to the curb, gutter, and drainage continues with traffic shifted onto the new Woodruff Road.
 - Roper Mtn Road/Roper Mtn Road Extension utility relocation work is expected to be completed by October 2021, allowing the contractor to begin work on the new bridge over Rocky Creek.
 - Woodruff Road Congestion Relief surveying to be finished in fall 2021 with right-of-way plan development to begin afterward with completion in the spring or summer 2022.
 - SC-153 Intersection Improvement consists of two intersections. Both are completed with the exception of minor items. A final inspection is tentatively scheduled soon.

- SC-107 Butler Road project's comments from the public involvement meetings were sent out. The consultant is working on the preferred alternative design to present at the additional public meeting in the fall. SCDOT is working with the consultant on a contract model for additional design work needed.
- Bridge projects were as follows:
 - S-154 over Huff Creek comments were gathered from public information held in August 2021, and SCDOT responded to these comments. The right-of-way plans are in development.
 - S-140 over Shoal Creek and S-250 over Doddies Creek were let together and have moved into the construction phase. The contract was awarded to Clearwater Construction.
- TA Program were as follows:
 - Woodside Streetscape and Woodside Park Connector construction plans are close to being completed, with utility coordination still ongoing for Woodside Streetscape. The let date is scheduled for February 2022 to allow for utility coordination.
 - West Georgia Road preliminary design is being revised by the consultant based on input from the public meeting held in July 2021.

Ms. Lucas made herself available for any questions.

GPATS PERFORMANCE MEASURES UPDATE

Brennan Groel addressed the members 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 with members 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 stated Greenlink provided their Transit Safety Targets 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

Ms. Groel advised Clemson Area Transit (CAT) has recently updated its Transit Safety Targets. These targets were not received in time to be included with this amendment. CAT's Transit Safety Target updates will be submitted at the next Study Team meeting for their recommendation and then to the Policy Committee for adoption.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval or any objections from the members to pass the Long-Range Transportation Plan document amendment recommendations 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 pass the Transportation Improvement Program document amendment recommendations to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

FEDERAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY SECTION 5310 CALL FOR PROJECTS

Asangwua Ikein addressed members of the annual Call for Projects for Federal Transit Authority (FTA) Section 5310 funding. There is an estimated \$880,000 available for applicants. Anyone interested in applying for these funds was asked to contact him or visit the link on www.gpats.org for the application. He advised there is seldom participation applying for these funds due to federal requirements.

Mr. Ikein explained the FTA Section 5310 funding has lapsed. GPATS receives approximately \$350,000 FTA Section 5310 funding a year and has three years to use these funds. If the funds are not used, they are returned to the Treasury Department. He stated the year 2018 funds lapsed and were extended by the CARES Act for one year; however, the year 2019 funds lapsed were not extended.

Mr. Ikein made himself available for any questions

A question was asked to explain what FTA Section 5310 is.

Mr. Ikein replied the FTA Section 5310 funds are for transit service providers for the Elderly, Disabled, and Job Access.

Keith Brockington moved to Agenda Item Number 6 due to connection technical issues SCDOT was experiencing.

GPATS 2022 MEETING SCHEDULE

Keith Brockington reviewed with members the GPATS Calendar Year 2022 proposed scheduled meetings.

Recommendation: Mr. Brockington asked for approval or any objections from the members to pass the GPATS 2022 Meeting Schedule recommendations to the Policy Committee for their approval. No verbal objections or questions by consensus.

SCDOT COMPLETE STREETS

Christina Lewis, Statewide Planning Chief with SCDOT, addressed the members with a presentation for SCDOT Complete Streets Directive 28 approved in February 2021. 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 was also approved to address bicycling accommodations that will be considered part of the annual Pavement Improvement Program and presented to the SCDOT 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 system of roadways. 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 SC 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. The 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 advised Work Zone Traffic Control plans have to address all modes of transportation currently being accommodating. 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. The 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. 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 comprises 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.

Tee Coker, Planning Director with the County of Greenville, asked when MPO and COG plans need to be in place to meet the eligibility requirement for the program.

Ms. Lewis asked to confirm if this was for the Pavement and Improvement Program or in general.

Mr. Coker asked to begin with, Pavement and Improvement Program.

Ms. Lewis replied SCDOT has asked the MPOs and COGs to go ahead and enter their projects. The deadline for projects listed in their Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) or the Bike and Pedestrian Plans is October 1st. She advised the SCDOT Maintenance Office is developing its Pavement and Improvement Program for 2022. She advised the mapping application is continuously updated. She stated she does not want agencies thinking their plans would not be considered if they do not have them at the moment. She noted this can be done at any point.

Todd Steadman, Planner with the City of Clemson, wanted to know if this presentation could be shared with the Study Team members.

Keith Brockington advised this presentation would be sent after the conclusion of the meeting. He stated Brennan Groel has been working and gathering information for the GPATS projects for the SCDOT's system. He announced he is on the Complete Street Council and hopes to find out more in November what this will mean for MPOs and COGs regarding the Bike and Pedestrian Plan. He advised GPATS does not have a stand-alone Bike and Pedestrian Plan separate from the LRTP. He stated this will need to happen to fully comply with the Complete Street Directive.

OLD BUSINESS

Brennan Groel wanted to clarify the previous LRTP and TIP documents amendment agenda item. She stated GPATS has the Clemson Area Transit (CAT) Safety Targets. These Targets were received after the agenda was set and will be presented at the first Study Team meeting in January 2022.

Keith Brockington stated that the GPATS' Transportation Management Area (TMA) Certification was completed and hoped to present a draft report at the Policy Committee meeting.

Keith Brockington advised Lance Estep, with ACOG, was unable to attend this meeting. There is no update regarding the Freight Plan, and the complete plan can be viewed on the ACOGs website.

Keith Brockington stated the Laurens Road Travel Oriented Development (TOD) Study is steadily moving forward and are heavily engaged in the public engagement stage. He advised a link can be found on the agenda page or by Google searching for Realizing Laurens Road for the survey. He explained the consultant is moving into the plan development.

Keith Brockington advised on the Mobility and Thoroughfare Plan (MTP). GPATS is recalibrating what the plan needs to be moving forward and how it relates to the Greenville County Unified Development Ordinance. He estimates the MTP to be completed in early 2022.

Chris Brink, Planner with County of Pickens, advised the staff received the draft copy of the Pickens County Comprehensive Plan on September 17, 2021. He advised an aggressive adoption scheduled to be concluded by the end of the year. He stated there will be an Advisory Committee meeting at the end of October 2021 and an open house with the Planning Commission in November 2021. The Comprehensive Plan will then go to Pickens' County Council in December 2021, with adoption before the end of the year.

Keith Brockington advised the 2045 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is a minor five-year update. He stated the timeline for this will begin soon and be completed before the 2020 Census Expansion of the Urbanized Area is released by Summer 2022. GPATS will hold an intensive public engagement process throughout the region. He asked for everyone to be watching for the dates and times of these meetings.

An inquiry was made for an update regarding the Augusta Street Improvement Study.

Valeria Holmes, Planner with the City of Greenville, advised the draft Road Safety Audit (RSA) was submitted to Greenville for review and comments. She stated Standtech is to receive these comments either today or tomorrow.

NEW BUSINESS:

Keith Brockington informed the members GPATS Chairman Butch Kirven will no longer be serving on the GPATS Policy Committee. He advised Senator Rex Rice has agreed to be interim Chairman until elections can be held for Chairman.

Senator Rice expressed that Mr. Kirven performed a fantastic service over the many years. He asks for patience during this time of transition while moving forward.

Keith Brockington stated the County of Greenville, City of Greenville, and City of Mauldin has begun a Woodruff Road parallel area plan. He advised this plan is a land use and surrounding area study to look at the invariance around the Woodruff Road Congestion Relief (WRCR) Project. The goals and objectives are still being developed for this plan.

ADJOURNMENT

Without objection, Mr. Brockington adjourned the meeting at 10:59 a.m.


Submitted by Recording Secretary