

**MINUTES**  
**SUATS POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 12, 2023 @ 12:00 P.M.**  
**CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS**  
**(21 N. MAIN STREET, SUMTER, SC)**

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** The Honorable Mayor **David P. Merchant**; County Council Chairman **James T. McCain**, County Councilman **James Byrd, Jr.**; State Senator **J. Thomas McElveen, III**; Sumter CTC Chairman **Hugh M. McLaurin, IV**; Planning Commission Chairman **James Munford**; Sumter County Manager **Gary Mixon** and Sumter City Manager **Deron McCormick**.

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** Sumter Economic Development Board President & CEO **Jay Schwedler**; State Representative **J. David Weeks**; State Representative **G. Murrell Smith**; Sumter County Administrator **Gary Mixon**; Shaw Air Force Base Commander Col. **Derek O'Malley**, SCDOT 5<sup>th</sup> District Commissioner **David E. "Gene" Branham**, and SCDOT 6<sup>th</sup> District Commissioner **John Barnwell Fishburne**.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** (See sign-in sheet)

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Senior Planner **Kyle Kelly**, Planning Director **Helen Roodman**, and Executive Assistant **Kellie Chapman**.

A meeting of the Sumter Area Transportation Study (SUATS) Policy Committee was held on Wednesday, October 12, 2023, @ 12:00 p.m. in City Council Chambers (21 N. Main St., Sumter, SC). Chairman David Merchant called the meeting to order.

A motion to approve the agenda for the October 12, 2023, meeting was made by Mr. Byrd and seconded by Mr. McCain. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes from the July 19, 2023, meeting was made by Mr. Byrd and seconded by Mr. McCain. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

**Revision #15 to SUATS FY2021-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Kelly stated the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the SUATS area's transportation capital improvement program, which contains a matrix of transportation projects consistent with federal regulations and area policies and strategies. The TIP serves as a planning tool to ensure the most effective use of limited funding for transportation improvements. Federal transportation legislation requires that transportation improvements be identified in the TIP to be eligible for federal funding.

The proposed Revision #15 to the current TIP for FFY2021-2027 incorporates the following modifications:

1. Project Name for West Calhoun Street Traffic Calming Project to "West Calhoun Street Road Diet".

2. Shift Construction (C) phase funding for West Calhoun Street Road Diet project from FY2024 to FY2025.

A 21-day public comment period must be observed prior to any amendment to the TIP. A summary of substantive comments received will be made available to the Committee upon request. Pending no substantive comments, the proposed changes will be included in SUATS TIP Revision #15.

Staff recommends that the Policy Committee provisionally adopt the Revision #15 to the SUATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the FY 2021-2027, subject to a 21-day public comment period as required by the SUATS Public Participation Plan.

A motion to accept the Revision #15 to the SUATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the FY 2021-2027 was made by Mr. McCain and seconded by Mr. Munford. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

### **SUATS 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

The federal government requires a comprehensive, cooperative, and continuing process for initiatives to be eligible for federal transportation funding. Federal regulations require the region's LRTP be updated every 5 years to reflect changing needs and 1 23 CFR 450c, De.450.322 priorities.

At its core, a long range transportation plan (LRTP) identifies ways a region expects to invest resources to enhance its transportation system. The underlying principles and recommended actions of a LRTP reflect choices made by the public and private sectors regarding transportation investments, land use decisions, and infrastructure improvements.

A typical LRTP consists of 2 parts – a description of the vision for the region and a detailed list of policies, operational strategies, and projects to achieve the vision. The LRTP must include a variety of actions that lead to “the development of an integrated intermodal transportation system that facilitates the efficient movement of people and goods”. These tasks are accomplished within the context of policy review and public involvement to produce an intermodal transportation system that respects an area's history and heritage while providing true choice to all users. The proposed 2050 LRTP updates the existing SUATS LRTP last updated November 2018.

Staff recommends that the Policy Committee provisionally adopt the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan, subject to a 30-day public comment period as required by the SUATS Public Participation Plan.

A motion to adopt the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan was made by Mr. McCain and seconded by Mr. McLaurin. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

### **West Liberty Street Road Diet Feasibility Report**

Mr. Kelly stated in FY2021, the SUATS Policy Committee commissioned a Feasibility Study to review the viability of completing improvements to W. Liberty St. between Sumter St. and Alice Dr., with the specific emphasis on evaluating the feasibility of a “road diet”.

As part of the Feasibility Report, four (4) alternatives were evaluated to identify the preferred alternative that would address the project purpose and need, which is to provide operational improvements at key intersections, improve safety along W. Liberty St. through lane adjustments and geometric improvements at intersections. The alternatives were evaluated based on the purpose and need, project goals, potential risks and constructability, and benefit/cost analysis.

The primary SUATS project number for this project is TC.1, referenced in the SUATS 2045 LRTP, as amended. The corridor is also ranked as the #14 roadway operational/design improvement project in the SUATS 2045 LRTP. Finally, there are two (2) intersections in the study area that are identified in the SUATS 2045 LRTP (Guignard Dr. @ W. Liberty St. and Alice Dr. @ W. Liberty St.). These intersections are ranked as the #2 and #8 priority intersection projects, respectively.

The Feasibility Report recommends advancement to the Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase of work of Alternative #4, which converts W. Liberty St. between Alice Drive and Sumter Street to a continuous 3-lane roadway consisting of 2 through lanes and a center two-way left-turn lane (TWLTL) and recommends a single land roundabout at the intersection of Alice Dr. and W. Liberty St., as it provides the most favorable benefit/cost ratio and satisfies the project's purpose, need, and goals.

Risks associated with the preferred alternative included utility conflicts, right-of-way impacts, and property impacts at the intersections of Alice Dr. and W. Liberty St.

Staff recommends that Policy Committee formally accept the Feasibility Report and begin discussions on programming Preliminary Engineering (PE), Right-of-Way Acquisition (ROW), and Construction (C) phase of work via future Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendment.

The committee formally accepted.

### **FY2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Kelly added the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) is the SUATS area's transportation capital improvement program, which contains a matrix of transportation projects consistent with federal regulations and area policies and strategies. The TIP serves a planning tool to ensure the most effective use of limited funding for transportation improvements. Federal transportation legislation requires that transportation improvements be identified in the TIP to be eligible for federal funding.

As part of the update cycle for the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIP), which requires that a new TIP be written after three (3) fiscal years to advance the planning horizon, SUATS must build a new TIP to cover Fiscal Years 2024 through 2033.

In a departure from previous TIPs, the new TIP will cover a longer planning timeline (10 years instead of 7), which allows additional annual Regional Mobility Program (RMP) funds to be allocated and projects to be planned out over a longer lead time. SUATS anticipates receiving \$5 million per year for the Regional Mobility Program during the FY24-33 TIP, which, when combined with anticipated carryover funds of \$14.1 million, will result in a total budget of \$64.1 million. There is a total of \$11.3 million in committed project funding that

will be carried over from the current TIP, leaving \$52.7 million available to program for projects between FY2024 and FY2033.

Staff offers this information for the Policy Committee's information. Staff will present a final draft of the FY2024-FY2033 TIP to the Policy Committee for review and opening of public comment period on November 2023, with intent to adopt the final document on January 2024.

### **Revision to SCDOT Commission Policy #3 – Regional Mobility Program Match and Maintenance Responsibility**

Mr. Kelly mentioned at the SCDOT Commission's regular meeting on September 21, 2023, the Commission considered and adopted a revision to Commission Policy #3, which covers match and maintenance responsibilities for projects funded using the Regional Mobility Program (RMP), which was previously known as the "Guideshare" program.

Several elements of the policy change are important for SUATS to note as future projects are developed and funded:

1. SCDOT has removed system preservation (resurfacing and bridge replacements) from the list of eligible Regional Mobility Program projects. The reasoning behind this is that the RMP funds are dedicated for system improvements, and SCDOT has significant funding for bridge and resurfacing projects within its 10-year plan.
2. The 20% non-federal match requirement is provided by SCDOT for most project categories, but is not provided for landscaping projects that are part of a large capacity or operational improvement or standalone landscaping project, decorative mast arms and lighting, traffic calming projects as defined by SCDOT guidelines, or burying utilities as part of a widening or road diet project. A 20% local match is also required for road projects not on the state system, as well as transit projects.

Staff offers this information for the Policy Committee's information. No further action is required by the Policy Committee at this time.

### **Active Projects Update**

Mr. Kelly provided a brief status update on current area transportation improvement projects funded via the Sumter Penny for Progress sales tax initiative and SUATS Guideshare Program. The briefing focused on the implementation schedules for each major phase of work.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kellie K. Chapman*

Kellie K. Chapman  
Board Secretary