

MINUTES
SUATS POLICY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 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.**; City Councilman **Colin Davis**, State Senator **J. Thomas McElveen, III**; Planning Commission Chairman **James Munford**; Sumter Economic Development Board President & CEO **Jay Schwedler**; Shaw Air Force Base Representative **Ashley Nichols**; Sumter County Manager **Gary Mixon** and Sumter City Manager **Deron McCormick**.

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Sumter CTC Chairman **Hugh M. McLaurin, IV**; State Representative **J. David Weeks**; State Representative **G. Murrell Smith**; SCDOT 5th District Commissioner **David E. “Gene” Branham**, and SCDOT 6th 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 Tuesday, November 28, 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 November 28, 2023, meeting was made by Mr. Schwedler and seconded by Mr. Munford. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes from the October 12, 2023, meeting was made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. McCain. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

2020-2024 Safety Performance Measure Targets

Erin Porter, Chief Asset and Performance Manager with SCDOT’s Office of Planning, presented a briefing on progress towards meeting existing statewide safety performance targets as well as details on countermeasures and initiatives underway at the state level. The presentation also included data for setting new performance targets and the timeline for target adoption.

Mr. Kelly stated federal regulation and SCDOT Planning Procedures Agreement PL-2017-01 require that MPO Long Range Transportation Plans include Safety Performance Measure Targets for urbanized areas.

To accomplish this requirement, staff proposed to include the Statewide Annual Safety Performance Measure Targets for the 5-year average covering 2020-2024 in the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan's initial adoption schedule, as follows:

Measure	Statewide 2020-2024 Targets	SUATS Portion of Statewide Targets
Number of Fatalities	1,079	17.4
Fatality Rate*	1.870	2.462
Number of Serious Injuries	2,549	50.8
Serious Injury Rate*	4.410	7.187
Number of Non-motorized Fatalities and Serious Injuries	454.8	8.2

Staff recommended that the Policy Committee include the 2020-2024 Safety Performance Measure Targets in the SUATS 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

A motion to adopt the 2020-2024 Safety Performance Measure Targets as presented and recommended by staff 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 *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.

A 30-day public comment period was held from October 17, 2023, through November 16, 2023. Notice was published in the Sumter Item via legal advertisement, and materials were made available on the SUATS website and SUATS Facebook and Instagram accounts. The Sumter Item also published a front-page news story on the project during the first week of public comment, and WLTX News broadcast a feature on the project as well. Four residents contacted Planning Staff with public comment via phone and email, and an additional two residents visited the Planning Department to review physical copies of the

draft plan.

Staff recommended that the Policy Committee adopt the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan.

A motion to adopt the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan as presented and recommended by staff was made by Mr. Schwedler and seconded by Mr. McElveen. 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 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 2 intersections in the study area that are identified in the SUATS 2045 LRTP (Guignard Dr. at W. Liberty St. and Alice Dr. at 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 presented to the Policy Committee two options to advance this project: The first option was to program a \$1,500,000 Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase of work and a \$2,200,000 Right-of-Way Acquisition (ROW) phase of work via the FY-2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The second option was to program a \$1,500,000 PE phase of work, a \$2,200,000 ROW phase of work, and a \$6,700,000 Construction (C) phase of work via the FY-2024-2033 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

A motion to allocate \$1,500,000 for Preliminary Engineering (PE) and \$2,200,000 for Right-

of-Way Acquisition (ROW) was made by Mr. Schwedler and seconded by Mr. Davis. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

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 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.

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.

Staff recommended that the Policy Committee provisionally adopt the SUATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY-2024-2033, subject to completion of a 21-day public comment period as required by the SUATS Public Participation Plan.

A motion to provisionally adopt the FY2024-2033 SUATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), subject to a 21-day public comment period, was made by Mr. Davis and seconded by Mr. Schwedler. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

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

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Board Secretary