

MINUTES
SUATS POLICY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JULY 19, 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.**; Sumter Economic Development Board President & CEO **Jay Schwedler**; State Representative **J. David Weeks**; and Sumter City Manager **Deron McCormick**.

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Chairman; State Senator **J. Thomas McElveen, III**; Sumter CTC Chairman **Hugh M. McLaurin, IV**; Planning Commission Chairman **James Munford**; State Representative **G. Murrell Smith**; Sumter County Administrator **Gary Mixon**; Shaw Air Force Base Commander Col. **Derek O'Malley**, 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 Wednesday, July 19, 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 July 19, 2023, meeting was made by Mr. McCain and seconded by Mr. Weeks. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes from the May 16, 2023, meeting was made by Mr. Schwedler and seconded by Mr. McCain. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

Revision #13 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 #13 to the current TIP for FFY2021-2027 incorporates the following modifications:

1. Add Preliminary Engineering (PE) funding for the West Calhoun Street Traffic Calming project at \$40,000 for FY2024.

2. Add Right-of-Way Acquisition (ROW) for the West Calhoun Street Traffic Calming project at \$10,000 for FY2024.
3. Increase Construction © funding for West Calhoun Street Traffic Calming project from \$200,000 to \$400,000 and shift phase 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 #13.

Staff recommends that the Policy Committee provisionally adopt the Revision #13 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 #13 to the SUATS Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the FY 2021-2027 was made by Mr. McCain and seconded by Mr. Schwedler. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

SUATS Study Area Boundary Adjustment Based on 2020 Census

As defined by the U.S. Census Bureau and used throughout federal agencies as a mechanism for categorizing places, urban areas represent densely developed territory, and encompass residential, commercial, and other nonresidential urban land uses. Urban areas are defined primarily based on housing unit density measured at the census block level.

The Census Bureau adopted two key changes to the methodology for classifying urban areas for the 2020 Census:

1. Raising the minimum threshold for qualification as an urban area to a least 2,000 housing units or at least 5,000 people; and
2. Using primarily housing unit density to identify qualifying census blocks instead of population density.

As outlined in the federal legislation that established the MPO system, SUATS, in cooperation with SCDOT and area transit providers, must review its boundaries after each Census to determine if existing MPA boundaries meet the minimum statutory requirements for new and update urbanized area(s), and adjust as necessary. As appropriate, additional adjustments should be made to reflect the most comprehensive boundary to foster an effective planning process that ensures connectivity between modes, improves access to modal systems, and promotes efficient overall transportation investment strategies.

While changes in the Census methodology did not cause any portions of Sumter's urban area to extend beyond the existing MPO boundary, there are opportunities to "rightsize" the MPO boundaries to reflect the boundaries that foster an effective planning process.

Staff recommends that the Policy Committee adopt the proposed updated 2020 SUATS Study Area Boundary as presented, and forward the adopted boundary to SCDOT for inclusion in the State of South Carolina's comprehensive boundary update submission to USDOT.

A motion to adopt the proposed updated 2020 SUATS Study Area Boundary as presented, and forward the adopted boundary to SCDOT for inclusion in the State of South Carolina's comprehensive boundary updated submission to USDOT was made by Mr. Byrd and seconded by Mr. McCain. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

2050 Long Range Transportation Plan

Mr. Kelly provided status update on the current project schedule and activities for the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan.

“Connect 378” US-378 Corridor Feasibility and Conceptual Engineering Design Project

Mr. Kelly updated the Committee on the current project schedule and activities for the “Connect 378” project.

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