

MINUTES
SUATS POLICY COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, APRIL 24, 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, Jr.**; Sumter CTC Chairman **Hugh M. McLaurin, IV**; Planning Commission Chairman **James Munford**; and State Representative **J. David Weeks**.

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT: Chairman; State Senator **J. Thomas McElveen, III**; County Councilman **James Byrd, Jr.**; State Representative **G. Murrell Smith**; Sumter County Administrator **Gary Mixon**; Sumter Economic Development Board President & CEO **Jay Schwedler**; Sumter City Manager **Deron McCormick**; 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 Monday, April 24, 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 April 24, 2023, meeting was made by Mr. Weeks and seconded by Mr. McLaurin. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes from the February 24, 2023, meeting was made by Mr. McCain and seconded by Mr. McLaurin. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes from the March 31, 2023, meeting (at which there was no quorum present) was made by Mr. Weeks and seconded by Mr. McCain. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

FY2024 & FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Kelly stated the SUATS FY2024 & FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) will describe all urban transportation and transportation-related planning activities anticipated in SUATS for the period July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2025.

The ten (10) proposed major tasks are as follows:

- Task 1 – Administration and Management
- Task 2 – Long Range Planning

- Task 3 – Short-Range Planning
- Task 4 - Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)
- Task 5 – Project Implementation and Monitoring
- Task 6- Modal Planning
 - A – Bicycle and Pedestrian
 - B – Transit
 - C – Intermodal Freight
- Task 7 – Transportation Data Collection and Analysis
- Task 8 – Land Use Monitoring and Analysis
- Task 9 - Public Involvement
- Task 10 – MPO Consultant Services

Specific details and activities for each major task are included in the draft UPWP, along with Federal funding resources and budget summaries for both FY2024 and FY2025.

SCDOT has provided the summary of available planning funds for SUATS for the FY2023 & FY2024 period, which represents a consolidated federal planning grant that combines Federal Highways Administration (FHWA) Planning (PL) funds and Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5303 Mass Transit Planning Funds.

Federal Allocation for FY23/24	\$239,325.58
Local Match Required (20%)	\$59,831.39
Unspent Funds from Prior Years (carryover)	\$81,357.59
Local Match Required (20%)	\$20,339.40
USDOT Recission	(\$2,992.16)
Anticipated Federal Allocation For FY24/25	\$239,325.58
Local Match Required (20%)	\$59,831.39
UPWP Total (For 2 Year Program)	\$697,018.77

Additionally, there are two items of national interest that impact SUATS funding this year:

USDOT Complete Streets Waiver – In January 2023, USDOT issued a waiver on the non-Federal match for Metropolitan Planning (PL) funds in support of Complete Streets Planning Activities. Under the waiver, MPOs may use federal funding for 100% of the expenses associated with such planning and research activities. MPOs are required to use at least 2.5% of provided federal PL funds on Complete Streets planning activities.

USDOT Accounting Error and Resulting Rescission of Funds – In February 2023, USDOT found a major error in their accounting system. The issue is connected to billions in “old money” that reports as available to states via a daily electronic interface versus USDOT’s internal bookkeeping system. USDOT has taken the position that their internal bookkeeping system is the official record, and as a result is disallowing access to the “old money” that was appearing in the daily electronic interface. For South Carolina a total of \$32,913.79 is being equally rescinded across the 11 MPOs, with a resulting rescission of \$2,992.16 applicable to SUATS.

A 21-day public comment period must be observed prior to adoption of the UPWP. A summary of substantive comments received will be made available to the Committee upon request. Pending no substantive comments, the UPWP will be adopted and submitted to SCDOT and FHWA.

Staff recommends that the Policy Committee provisionally adopt the proposed FY2024 & FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), subject to completion of a 21-day public comment period as required by SUATS Public Participation Plan.

A motion to accept the FY2024 & FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) was made by Mr. McCain and seconded by Mr. Weeks. 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.

Thriving Communities Program (TCP)

Mr. Kelly provided a status update on Sumter’s application to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Thriving Communities Program (TCP), which aims to ensure that eligible communities have the tools and capacity to deliver quality infrastructure projects that enable their communities and neighborhoods to thrive.

Mr. Kelly reported that Sumter has been selected as a recipient of technical assistance, planning, and capacity building support through the Thriving Communities Program (TCP) Complete Neighborhoods Project Acceleration Cohort. Sumter is 1 of 64 communities nationwide selected to be part of the program, and 1 of 3 in the State of South Carolina (including North Charleston and Atlantic Beach). There were 311 total applicants for the program, and a success rate of 20%.

TCP is not a direct grant funding program, but does represent a nationwide \$20+ million effort by USDOT to assist communities with the critical early stages of program and project development in order to leverage billions of federal grant dollars available now and in the coming years for transportation infrastructure projects.

The program requires a lead entity and initial designation of 2 community partners.

- Lead entity: SUATS MPO

- Community Partner #1: City of Sumter
- Community Partner #2: Sumter EDGE

Other partners, including Sumter County, Santee-Lynches COG, and TheLink will be included throughout the 2-year program.

2050 Long Range Transportation Plan – Draft MetroQuest Survey

Mr. Kelly provided a brief status update on status of the draft community survey that will be part of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Update. Mr. Kelly showed the Committee members views of the survey sections, and outlined the schedule for release and collection of results, including: Build Survey by Friday, April 28, 2023, Launch Survey on Wednesday, May 3, 2023, and Close Survey on Friday, June 30, 2023

Respectfully submitted,

Kellie K. Chapman

Kellie K. Chapman
Board Secretary