



Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS)
Policy Committee Meeting Friday, February 4, 2022, 10:00 a.m.
Meeting Location: In-Person TCL New River Campus Conference Room

Policy Committee Members Present:

Joe DeVito, Town of Port Royal
Harry Williams, City of Hardeeville
Stephen Murray, City of Beaufort
Glenn Stanford, Hilton Head Island
Susan Zellman, LRTA
Robby Robbins, SCDOT Commission Chairman

Policy Committee Members Absent:

Lisa Sulka, Town of Bluffton
Sen. Tom Davis, JC Leg. Delegation Chairman
Barbara Clark, Jasper County
Paul Sommerville, Beaufort County Council

Technical Committee Members Present:

Kraig Gordon, Chairman Beaufort CTC
Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA
Lisa Wagner, Jasper County

Technical Committee Members Absent:

Katie Woodruff, City of Hardeeville
Anne Cyran, Town of Hilton Head
Kevin Icard, Town of Bluffton
Noah Krepps, Town of Port Royal
David Pritchard, City of Beaufort
Rob Merchant, Beaufort County

LCOG Staff Present:

Sabrena Graham, Executive Director
Stephanie Rossi, Planning Director
Christian Dammel, Planner I

SCDOT Staff Present:

Craig Winn
LaToya Grate
Megan Groves
David Gray
Josh Johnson
Scott Donahue

Others Present:

Mark Pleasant, FHWA
Mike McFee, City of Beaufort
Jared Felix, Beaufort County
Barbara Childs, LRTA
Stu Rodman, Beaufort County
Mark Wilkes, Coastal Region MPO
Allison Fluitt, Kimley- Horn
Starla Couso, Kimley- Horn
Bill Jordan, AECOM
Bob Kuhlman
John Kemp, Jasper County
Frank Turano, Alliance Construction Engineers
Matt Davis, City of Hardeeville



1. Call to Order.

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Invocation
- c. Introduction of Members, Guests and Staff
- d. Designees
- e. Action on [October 1, 2021, Meeting Minutes](#) (Draft minutes attached.)
Glenn Stanford made the motion to approve the October 1st, 2021 meeting minutes, Joe DeVito seconded, the motion passed unanimously.
- f. Action on [December 3, 2021, Meeting Minutes](#) (Draft minutes attached.)
Glenn Stanford made the motion to approve the October 1st, 2021 meeting minutes, Joe DeVito seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

2. Old Business.

- a. [SCDOT US 278 and US 17 Project Update](#)—Craig Winn, SCDOT

US 278

SCDOT has been working over the past three months with Beaufort County and the consultant team, responding to the recommendations from the Town of Hilton Head Island's consultants. The finalized responses to the recommendations are anticipated to go out within the next week to the Town council. SCDOT tentatively scheduled another public information meeting regarding modifications to the preferred alternative for March 3rd, 2022 at the Island Recreation Center on HHI. There will also be a meeting with stakeholders on February 12th. The conceptual bridge layouts have been completed and were used to determine the most optimal bridge design, including span lengths, pier placement and tie-in points. Elevations have been added and the layouts have been revised to bring drainage and required vertical clearances to a more defined state. SCDOT has completed their responses to each of the 546 public comments received on US 278.

US 17

US 17 has an anticipated completion date of September 30th, 2025. Construction is ongoing for the widening of the roadway embankment behind the barrier wall. Work at the intersection of US 17 and SC 315 has been initiated to allow for signal installation. The latest estimates place the signal to be operational in March. Upon completion of the widening a surcharge will be added onto the embankment and a settlement waiting period of twelve to eighteen months will commence until settlement is reached. During that time here will be little activity on site.

- Stu Rodman inquired as to whether the rail right of way was in some way defined in the US 17 project, given that the Jasper Ocean Terminal port might happen in the outer ways. Craig Winn responded stating that it was not as part of this project.



b. 700 Crosswalks 2021 Update—Josh Johnson, SCDOT

Josh Johnson gave an update on the Project: 700 Crosswalks initiative. The initiative by SCDOT District 6 is meant to upgrade or install 700 new pedestrian crosswalks at intersections across the district within seven years. The initiative recently completed its third year and has completed a total of 237 crosswalk upgrades, the majority of which fall within the BCDCOG region. An additional 134 crosswalks are in the planning phase for 2022. To date only 27 crosswalk upgrades have occurred within the LCOG region. Josh Johnson stated that he is looking for more opportunities in the LCOG region and asked for local governments to contact him regarding any potential crosswalk projects they would be interested in partnering on.

c. Palmetto Breeze Update—Mary Lou Franzoni, Palmetto Breeze

Mary Lou Franzoni informed the LATS Policy Committee that Palmetto Breeze put out an RFP about a month ago for a study on exploring providing transit service to the Hilton Head Island Airport. The project has been awarded to RS&H. A survey will be sent out to HHI, LCOG, and the Chamber of Commerce to post on their websites and push out to reach participants that use the HHI airport.

Palmetto Breeze is also working on making modifications to its HHI Breeze Trolley route as well as the Bluffton Breeze Shuttle route. The HHI Breeze Trolley route will have some modifications done to its route on the south end to include Celebration Park and the Sandbox area as well as include Pope Avenue. The changes are not anticipated to affect the route times. The Bluffton Breeze shuttle route will be modified to include the Hilton Head National RV Resort, and old town Bluffton.

The Transit Association of South Carolina selected Palmetto Breeze to host its annual conference. The conference is the first weekend of March and will be held at the Westin Hotel. The conference includes a regional bus rodeo for the whole state that will take place at May River High School.

- Susan Zellman, Chair of the LRTA Board, informed the LATS Policy Committee that it would be her last meeting as the LRTA Chair. Charles Mitchell from Jasper County will take over as chair at the next meeting. Susan Zellman went on to thank Mary Lou for the exemplary job she has done for Palmetto Breeze.
- Glen Stanford stated that he believes Palmetto Breeze has begun to take hold and become more utilized by individuals in the area. Glenn Stanford went on to state that the only complaint he has heard was regarding a lack of space for luggage/baggage and asked whether Palmetto Breeze possibly adding trailers onto their HHI Breeze Trolleys. Mary Lou Franzoni responded saying they were not, however the three buses Palmetto Breeze had on order were retrofitted with



luggage racks, two of which are currently planned on being utilized for the HHI airport service. Other options are available as well.

d. [Update on the LATS Long Range Plan](#)—Kimley- Horn

Allison Fluitt and Starla Couso from Kimley-Horn presented an update on the LATS 2045 LRTP. The [presentation](#) covered a summary of existing conditions, analysis, project recommendations and the prioritization process followed by the into financial constraint process.

- Joe DeVito commented that all of the existing conditions data is from 2019 and that it's important to illustrate that he believes substantial changes have occurred between 2019 and 2021. Allison Fluitt responded saying that it was a valid point however 2019 was selected due to covid skewing the data on 2020 and 2021. She went on to state that a wealth of additional information will be coming out soon and it's important to contextualize all of this within the 2019 paradigm and that these plans are updated regularly to reflect that.
- Harry Williams agreed with Joe DeVito's comments and articulated his concern regarding traffic flows following the development of the millions of sq. feet of warehousing being developed in Jasper County. Harry Williams stated that he believes increased pressure on SC-170, SC-315, and Argent Boulevard is inevitable as a result and asked whether factors relating to planned development since 2019 have been factored into recommendations and decisions. Allison Fluitt responded saying that there have been discussions on it and that there is a recommendation to address some of these concerns through the development of a freight plan.
- Glenn Stanford said that there was a fair amount of interest in ferry services of which he saw no mention of and asked whether the presentation pertained to only roadways. Allison Fluitt responded stating that the LRTP did not only pertain to roadways but various forms of transit, ferry services included. She went on to state that they are aware of identification of potential ferry service as a potential project for inclusion and that it has been discussed as potentially part of the transit element. Glenn Stanford responded by suggesting a subset of the transit element be created to include potential ferry service.
- Joe DeVito stated that he found it interesting that the main corridor through Port Royal is recommended for access management and stated its importance as a throughfare for traffic and the workforce of Port Royal.
- Harry Williams inquired about whether the transportation sales tax passing would affect prioritization and to what degree. Allison Fluitt responded saying that the LRTP will exam and cover the two financial scenarios, the "Official" Scenario and the Sales Tax Scenario, which was covered later in the presentation in more detail.



- Stu Rodman stated that there was going to be a committee formed to put together a sales tax proposal, which would need to happen within the next eight to ten weeks. He went on to state that the sales tax scenario data that will be in the LATS LRTP would be needed regarding the next ten years, rather than the plans twenty-five-year span, when approaching the citizens with the sales tax proposal. He proceeded to ask whether such a subset of the data (10 years) would be available for use. Allison Fluitt responded saying yes and that the planning horizons already incorporated into the plan and could be used as a tool by the Committee.
- Stu Rodman said he was pleased to see that the project priorities included SC-170, US-278, and Argent Boulevard and asked whether the joint county planning and funding of the immediate term portion of those projects is being included in the planning to identify ways to accelerate those projects. Allison Fluitt responded saying that when doing the sales tax scenario, the best path forward is to be as opportunistic with state and federal funding as possible by letting those projects that score well on the required prioritization criteria potentially progress through the LRTP process and use local funds to supplement those programs or projects that may not be fairing as well in prioritization. She went on to state that Argent Boulevard is one such project, that while it garnered a great deal of feedback from committees and the public, it doesn't score quite as well as some of the other projects in the prioritization process which would make it an ideal candidate for local funding.
- Harry Williams stated that it's important to keep in mind that the data is 2019 data and it doesn't account for the growth that will be seen along Argent Boulevard. He went on to state that he believes this is likely the reason it scored lower in prioritization and the reason for the priority disconnect seen.
- Stu Rodman asked whether 5B of the Bluffton Parkway was the project list and what its priority was. Harry Williams responded saying that was on the list and ranked in the lower priority tier.

3. New Business.

- a. [Regional Mobility Program TIP Modification](#) —Stephanie Rossi

Stephanie Rossi informed the LATS Policy Committee that she has received the official letter regarding LATS increase in annual Guideshare funding, set to take effect in FY 2022. LATS Guideshare Funds increased by \$656,541 to a total of \$5,281,000 annually.

4. Other Business.

Robby Robbins informed the LATS Policy Committee that he will be resigning, effective February 15th, 2022, from his position as SCDOT Commission Chairman to pursue his candidacy for the State House District ninety-seven seat. He went on to state that it has been



a distinct privilege to work with the LATS Policy Committee over the past six years and expressed his excitement regarding the improvements coming to the LATS region.

5. Public Questions via Facebook Live.

6. Next Meeting.

a. Friday, April 1, 2022

7. Adjourn.