

Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS)

Policy Committee Meeting Friday, April 9, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Location: Zoom

The link to join the Zoom Meeting:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/4830277728?pwd=cGZEMFgweUpNWFF5bzNwVHFqZ3lRZz09>

Meeting ID: 483 027 7728

Passcode: 8431969

To join by phone: (877)853-5247

Meeting ID: 483 027 7728

Passcode: 8431969

Policy Committee Members Present:

Chairwoman – Mayor Lisa Sulka, Town of Bluffton
Van Willis Designee for Joe DeVito, Town of Port Royal
Susan Zellman, LRTA
Mike McFee, City of Beaufort
Mayor Harry Williams, City of Hardeeville
Glenn Stanford, HHI
Paul Sommerville, Beaufort County Council

SCDOT Staff Present:

Craig Winn
LaToya Grate
Betsey McCall
Travis Cooper
Megan Groves

Others Present:

Ellen Lightsey, Lowcountry Inside Track

Policy Committee Members Absent:

Robby Robbins, SCDOT Commission Chairman
Sen. Tom Davis, JC Leg. Delegation Chairman
Barbara Clark, Jasper County

Technical Committee Members Present:

Kraig Gordon, Chairman Beaufort CTC
Mary Lou Franzoni, LRTA
Katie Woodruff, City of Hardeeville
Anne Cyran, Town of Hilton Head
Lisa Wagner, Jasper County
Kevin Icard, Town of Bluffton

Technical Committee Members Absent:

Rob Merchant, Beaufort County
Linda Bridges, Town of Port Royal
David Pritchard, City of Beaufort

LCOG Staff Present:

Stephanie Rossi, Planning Director
Christian Dammel, Planner I
Kira Fuller, Executive Assistant



Minutes

1. Call to Order.

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Invocation
- c. Introduction of Members, Guests and Staff
- d. Designees
- e. Action on February 5, 2021 [Meeting Minutes](#) (Draft minutes attached.)
Mike McFee made the motion to approve, Lisa Sulka seconded, the motion to approve the February 5, 2021 [Meeting Minutes](#) passed unanimously.

2. Old Business.

- a. Update on the LATS Long Range Plan, Complete Streets, etc.– Stephanie Rossi
ACTION: Information

Stephanie Rossi provided an update on the LRTP stating that LCOG was recently approved to move onto the contracting phase which requires SCDOT to review the agreement with Kimley-Horne before providing a notice to proceed.

Harry Williams stated that he wished to bring a couple of items to the attention of the committee in regards the LRTP. The first being that as a result of having received numerous complaints, the City of Hardeeville is aiming to undertake a study of the 170 argent boulevard intersection be looked at for timing citing the sever backup caused during rush hour at that intersection. However due to jurisdictional issues, their requests thus far have been denied. As such, Harry Williams made a request to the committee to place a higher priority to that intersection.

Lisa Sulka made the suggestion to have someone contact google in regards to inquiring whether google maps can alter the suggested route to I-95 through SC 170 and SC 462 to reduce congestion along SC 170.

Susan Zellman mentioned the possibility of Del Web expanding Sun City to the adjacent side of Argent Boulevard which she believes would constitute a light there as well. She went on to state that currently fifteen hundred homes are planned to be constructed in that location. Harry Williams confirmed and stated that those homes are part of the east argent boulevard development district. He went on to state that SCODT has been contacted in regards to a traffic light being installed at that corridor, constructing a prefab golf cart bridge, and inserting a left-hand turn lane for traffic traveling north to south at Sergeant



William Jasper Boulevard. Additionally, they City of Hardeeville is looking to add additional lighting for the location.

Lisa Sulka inquired as to whether all of the aforementioned project area is within Hardeeville's jurisdiction to which Harry Williams replied saying that it was not. Some portions are within unincorporated Jasper County in addition to Hardeeville's City limits.

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

ACTION: Information

Craig Winn stated that SCDOT had a US 278 stakeholder meeting last Wednesday to update them on the status and the timeline for the public hearing. Craig went on to discuss the community enhancements regarding the Stoney Community which they have met with six times to date. As a result of these meetings several ways to enhance the Stoney community have been identified. The four confirmed are as follows;

- Define the Stoney Community as a gateway community to Hilton Head Island with two signs for each entrance and a pavilion park area that illustrates the history, an interactive kiosk and artwork. Craig Winn also said that the details still need to be finalized.
- Create an online story map to tell of the community's history.
- A multiuse path will have low level lighting with street banners.
- A new paved road allowing for easier access to the Jenkins Island Cemetery with the access point being moved off of US 278.

Craig Winn went on to state that Beaufort County and the Town of Hilton Head Island were doing an independent review which was recently turned in to the oversight committee for review and comments. Once revised, it will be given to each of the councils then the SCDOT would analyze it and provide responses. After coordination with Beaufort County, the public meeting for US 278 that was originally scheduled for May has been pushed back to mid to late July allowing time to thoroughly analyze the independent review. Craig Winn said they are currently still in the process of finding a suitable vendor for the public meeting. He went on to say that SCDOT is in the process of developing possible intersection designs and will create a simulation to illustrate to Beaufort County officials and residents how it will work.

Glenn Stanford asked whether Craig Winn anticipates the announcement of final alternative to be presented at the rescheduled meeting in July. Craig Winn said yes, the final design will be published 15 days prior to the meeting with a public comment period of 30 days. Glenn Stanford asked when Craig Winn anticipates the complete simulation to be finished to which Craig Winn responded by saying there will be four simulations that they're anticipating to be ready sometime around mid to late May. Glenn Stanford inquired about SCDOTs interactions with the oversight committee to which Craig Winn responded that



SCDOT has not spoken directly with the oversight committee but has watched their meetings to stay informed. Glenn Stanford proceeded to ask as to why there hasn't been any meeting with the oversight committee. Craig Winn responded stating that the reasoning was due to the oversight committee was established so as to have an independent review. Glenn Stanford went on to ask whether the complete streets SCDOT initiative will be part of the US278 Project to which Craig Winn confirmed it would be included.

Craig Winn went on to discuss US 17, stating that they are currently in the process of installing road control measures as well as doing clearing and grubbing. Night time flagging operations to repaint the roadway for eleven-foot lanes are expected to begin within the week. Following this, the installation of temporary concrete barrier walls will occur which will allow the next step of relocation utilities to begin. This will be followed by pavement rehabs then the start of the widening. Craig Winn noted there is a chance for some delay during flagging operations.

Harry Williams asked as to whether any consideration has been given to his suggestion that the intersection improvements at SC-315 and US-17 be done at the front end of the project due to that intersection being "quite dangerous" and the delays that take place there. Craig Winn said he would need to speak with the district contract and would report back at the next LATS meeting. Lisa Sulka asked Craig Winn to let the committee know in advance to the meeting by sending the information to Stephanie Rossi so as she can relay it to the LATS policy committee.

c. Palmetto Breeze Update—Mary Lou Franzoni

ACTION: Information

Mary Lou informed the LATS Policy Committee that starting on 4/10/21 the 2021 season of the Trolley will begin. The Hilton Head Island Trolley route has been expanded with the addition of a mid-island route from Folly Field Road to Shelter Cove where individuals can transfer to the South Island route and vis versa. Mary Lou stated that the Hilton Head Island Trolleys would be fare free this year and listed the amenities the trolleys provide. Additionally, Palmetto Breeze received the go ahead to move forward with the new Bluffton routes. The two routes will start on July 1st, and go from 7am to 6pm Monday through Friday.

3. New Business.

a. Approval of [Amendment to the FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program](#)—Stephanie Rossi

ACTION: Approval amendment FY 2021 Unified Planning Work Program

Stephanie Rossi gave a [brief overview](#) of what the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) entails and discussed the proposed [amendment](#) to the [current UPWP](#). The amendment separates the LRTP funding for the consultant into its own individual task. Susan Zellman made the motion to approve, Glenn Stanford seconded, the motion passed unanimously.



- b. Approval of the [FY 2022 and FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program](#)—Stephanie Rossi
ACTION: Approval the FY 2022 and FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program
Stephanie Rossi discussed the [FY2022 and FY 2023 UPWP](#) and the comments received during the public comment period that can be found at the end of the document. Paul Sommerville made the motion to approve, Mike McFee seconded, the motion passed unanimously.

3. New Business (Continued)

- c. Election of Policy Committee Chair for a 2-year term per LATS By laws.
ACTION: Nomination and election of Chair

Glenn Stanford nominated Lisa Sulka as Chair, Mike McFee seconded, Susan Zellman moves to close the nominations. The nomination and election of Lisa Sulka to be the Policy Committee Chair for an additional two years passed unanimously.

Lisa Sulka nominated Harry Williams for Vice Chair, Mike McFee seconded, no additional nominations, none opposed, the nomination and election of Harry Williams for Vice Chair passed unanimously.

- d. Review Bylaws and recommended change to voting membership—Stephanie Rossi
ACTION: Discussion

Stephanie Rossi proposed several amendments to the LATS [bylaws](#). These included listing each of the SCDOT commissioners individually, changing the quorum to 1/3 of members plus one, and changing the reelection of the Chair to the last meeting of the year rather than the first meeting of the year.

Paul Sommerville stated his disagreement with having legislative and commissioner members as being voting members due to the increased difficulty it would cause the LATS Policy Committee. Lisa Sulka and Susan Zellman agreed and reaffirmed Paul Sommerville's stance. Stephanie Rossi said that she would make changes to the By-Laws to reflect SCDOT legislators and SCDOT commissioners as ex officio non-voting members and have a vote on the matter at the next meeting. Lisa Sulka asked for clarification on the proxy voting not being allowed as stated in the current By-Laws. Stephanie Rossi stated that it was in regards to proxy voting via email, text, etc. but will clarify that as well within the bylaws for the next meeting. Designees are allowed.

4. Other Business.



a. Update on the MSA and Census Changes– Stephanie Rossi

ACTION: Information

Stephanie Rossi spoke on the increased threshold of defining a Metropolitan Statistical Area from 50,000 population to 100,000 population. Presently, these are only suggestions and the implications at this point do not appear to affect MPO designation. The designation of MPOs is held by FHWA.

Glenn Stanford asked Stephanie Rossi as to whether it might be appropriate to contact local members of congress and the senate to inform them that this action might be detrimental to the state. Stephanie Rossi replied stating that given the uncertainty and whether it would even affect LATS, that it might be premature to do so but will look into what we can do.

Lisa Sulka suggested that the Committee be proactive and consider possible content for the letter if the need should arise.

Information on the matter, that was previously provided to the Policy Committee can be found below:

[AMPO to OMB Comments on Metropolitan Statistical Area Proposed Changes](#)

[NADO's Response to OMB's Metropolitan Statistical Area Proposed Changes](#)

5. Public Questions via Facebook Live.

Two questions from Eleanor Lightsey were posted to the Facebook live feed.

- The first was if there was anyway to see the information Craig Winn spoke on regarding US-278. The aforementioned documents were provided via Facebook.
- The second question was whether Yemassee has a representative on the Policy Committee. Lisa Sulka said there is not due to their location being outside of the MPO boundary. Lisa Sulka referred her to [LATS](#) page of the LCOG website.

6. Next Meeting.

a. Friday, June 4, 2021

7. Adjourn.

Mike McFee made the motion to adjourn, Harry Williams seconded. Meeting Adjourned