

Lowcountry Area Transportation Study (LATS)  
Policy Committee Meeting  
Friday, June 7, 2019, 10:00 a.m.  
TCL New River Campus, Conference Room  
MINUTES

**Policy Committee Members Present:**

Barbara Clark, Councilwoman, Jasper County  
Paul Sommerville, Councilman, Beaufort County  
Richard Hamilton, Board Chair, LRTA  
Chairman Lisa Sulka, Mayor, Town of Bluffton  
Harry Williams, Mayor, City of Hardeeville  
Glenn Stanford, Councilman, Town of Hilton Head Island

**Policy Committee Members Absent:**

Mike McFee, Councilman and Mayor Pro Tem, City of Beaufort  
Samuel E. Murray, Mayor, Town of Port Royal  
Robby Robbins, Chairman, SCDOT Commission  
Sen. Tom Davis, Jasper County Leg. Delegation Chairman

**Technical Committee Members Present:**

Kraig Gordon, Chairman, Beaufort CTC  
Anne Cyran, Senior Planner, Town of Hilton Head Island  
Lisa Wagner, Planning Director, Jasper County  
Rob McFee, Director of Engineering and Infrastructure, Beaufort County

**Technical Committee Members Absent:**

Mary Lou Franzoni, Executive Director, LRTA  
Katie Woodruff, Planning Manager, City of Hardeeville  
David Prichard, Community and Economic Development Director, City of Beaufort  
Linda Bridges, Planning Director, Town of Port Royal  
Kevin Icard, Planning and Community Development Manager, Town of Bluffton

**LCOG Staff Present:**

Sabrena Graham, Executive Director  
Ginnie Kozak, Planning Director  
Meredith Burns, Regional Planner  
Christian Dammel, Planning Assistant

**SCDOT Staff Present:**

LaToya Grate, SCDOT  
Craig Winn, SCDOT  
Megan Groves, SCDOT  
Branford Breland SCDOT

**Others Present:**

Charles Cousins, Assistant to the Town Manager, Town of Hilton Head Island  
David Spisso, Councilman, City of Hardeeville

Michael Dennis, Ramey Kemp & Associates  
Bill Jordan, AECOM  
Frank Turano, Alliance Consulting Engineers  
Pete Nardi, Hilton Head Public Service District Manager, Town of Hilton Head Island  
Mark Wilkes, Director, Coastal Region MPO Savannah  
Mark Pleasant, Federal Highway Administration  
Joe Croley, Lowcountry Inside Track  
Joe Fragale, Greater Island Council  
Marsha Harrison, Sun City Hilton Head  
Susan Zellman, LRTA  
John Boyle, LRTA  
Matt Davis, Deputy City Manager, City of Hardeeville  
David Johnson, 278 Gateway Committee  
Dan Wood, Councilman, Town of Bluffton  
Aubrie Giroux, Town of Bluffton  
Kelly Farabee, Wolverton  
Terry Herron, Greater Island Council

1. Call to Order.

- a. Pledge of Allegiance
- b. Invocation
- c. Introduction of Members, Guests and Staff
- d. Designees
- e. Action on April 5, 2019 Meeting Minutes (Draft minutes attached.)

Action: The committee unanimously approved meeting minutes from April 5, 2019.

2. Old Business. Deferred. Reports attached

- a. SCDOT US 278 and US 17 Project Update—Craig Winn  
ACTION: Information

The US 17 Project Update can be found [here](#). The status report for other projects in the LATS MPO can be found [here](#).

- b. Beaufort County Project Update, including sales tax referendum projects and BTG—Rob McFee and Kraig Gordon  
ACTION: Information

Resolution of Support for Beaufort County application to SC Transportation Infrastructure Bank for funding for US 278 Improvements Project (attached).  
ACTION: Approval

- c. Palmetto Breeze Update—John Boyle  
ACTION: Information
- d. SC 170 Corridor Access Management Study Update—AECOM staff  
ACTION: Information

3. New Business.

- a. Public Transit Planning, Phase 2—LATS  
ACTION: Information

Ginnie Kozak said AECOM has been selected as the consultant for the next phase of public transit planning in the small urban area (Bluffton and Hilton Head). There will be presentations and updates on the LATS website as the project progresses.

- b. Resolution of Support for Beaufort County application to SC Transportation Infrastructure Bank for funding for US 278 Improvements Project (attached).

ACTION: Approval

Rob McFee said Beaufort County requested the letter of support from LATS to reinforce points from their State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) application. The letter will be included as an addendum to the county's application.

The committee unanimously approved the resolution.

- c. TIP Changes (attached)
  - i. Palmetto Breeze FTA Budget Corrections (minor)
  - ii. 5310 Grants to Organizations

ACTION: Approval

The committee unanimously approved TIP changes to accommodate FTA budget corrections for Palmetto Breeze.

Ms. Kozak said action on the 5310 grant will be deferred until the next meeting.

- d. UPWP for FY 2020 and 2021 (work program for LATS)

ACTION: Approval and Approval of Resolution

Ms. Kozak said the Unified Planning Work Program outlines how money will be spent for LATS planning purposes. The proposed UPWP for FY 2020 and 2021 is similar to the one covering the previous two years, and it has been vetted by SCDOT and FHA. Ms. Kozak said a key upcoming activity will be the five-year update for the Long Range Transportation Plan.

Lisa Sulka asked if the document could be amended. Ms. Kozak said the document could be amended as needed.

The committee unanimously approved the UPWP.

#### 4. Other Business.

Mayor Sulka said less than a month ago SCDOT notified LATS there was a shortage of funds for the US 17 widening project. Mayor Sulka said Craig Winn of SCDOT would briefly present the issue at this meeting, but it would be discussed in detail at a special meeting on July 12.

The project involves widening US 17 in Jasper County between the Georgia State line and SC 315. The LATS MPO and Lowcountry COG have committed all of their combined guideshare funds through FY 2023 to the project, but the total project cost was recently increased to \$97 million. The project, which is ready for construction, now has a roughly \$25 million funding shortage.

Mr. Winn said he has discussed the issue with the SCDOT Planning Department and one option is to apply to the State Infrastructure Bank (SIB) for the total project cost. Mr. Winn said the applications are due Aug. 1 and Jan. 1, but recommends applying as early as possible. SIB applications typically require a 25% local match, which would be about \$20 million for this project. Mr. Winn said another option is to request an advancement on guideshare funding. Mr. Winn said he is also looking at options related to freight funding and rural road safety, but those are unlikely to make up for the \$25 million shortfall and SCDOT does not have a capacity program for roads outside of the interstate.

Mayor Sulka asked why local jurisdictions rather than SCDOT should submit the SIB application and provide the local match when the shortage wasn't their fault. Mr. Winn said it's a LATS project and the SCDOT Planning Department does not intend submit an application for the project.

Harry Williams asked if the money LATS already committed to the project could count as the local match. Mr. Winn said based on how the SIB criteria is written, guideshare funding does not qualify as local match. However, this would be the first time an MPO is applying for SIB funding. The SIB board is hosting a "question and answer" session next week and a question to ask is if the 25% local match requirement applies to an MPO.

Glenn Stanford said he would be concerned about submitting another SIB application that might compete with other SIB applications from the area. Mr. Winn said he asked about that, and was told the \$25 million ask would not affect the SIB application for the US 278 project.

Paul Sommerville asked if SCDOT has ever submitted a SIB application. Mr. Winn said they have in the past, but do not plan to submit one for this project. Mr. Sommerville asked why not. Mr. Winn said he does not have details about that decision from the SCDOT Planning Department.

Mark Wilkes suggested looking into federal BUILD Grants as a source of funding given how much work has already been completed on the project.

Mayor Sulka said whatever option they pursue, LATS needs some sort of commitment from SCDOT the project cost won't be raised again in a couple years. Mr. Winn said he can't commit to that because there is so much risk associated with this project. The project cost is largely determined by the contractor prices and those cannot be determined until the project is let, which requires providing all of the estimate funding up front. Mr. Winn said once funding is available it would take three to four months to let the project for construction.

Before the July 12 meeting, Ms. Kozak and Mr. Winn will submit the question about the local match to the SIB board.

5. Public Comment Period.
6. Next Meeting. Special Meeting, Friday, July 12, 2019.
7. Adjourn