

**GRAND STRAND AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY  
POLICY COMMITTEE MINUTES  
Virtual Meeting  
July 31, 2020**

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

Sen. Stephen Goldfinch, Chair  
Hon. Bob Hellyer, Surfside Beach  
Mr. John Thomas, Georgetown Co.  
Hon. Brenda Bethune, MB [Lisa Wallace]  
Rep. Russell Fry, Vice Chair  
Hon. Barbara Blain-Bellamy, Conway  
[Jessica Hucks]  
Hon. Brendon Barber, Georgetown  
Hon. Marilyn Hatley, NMB [Kevin Blayton]  
Mr. Darrell Eickhoff, Coast RTA  
Mr. Randall Thompson, Brunswick Co.  
Hon. Walt Eccard, Shallotte  
Mr. Brent Rewis, SCDOT [Jerome Pearson]  
Rep. Lee Hewitt  
Mr. Tony Cox, SCDOT Commission  
Mr. Mike Alford, NCDOT BOT  
Hon. Debbie Smith, Ocean Isle Beach

**EX OFFICIO MEMBERS  
PRESENT**

**STUDY TEAM/TAC MEMBERS  
PRESENT**

Mr. Daniel Newquist  
Mr. Boyd Johnson  
Mr. Stacey Johnson, SCDOT  
Ms. Elizabeth Tucker  
Mr. Mark Hoeweler  
Ms. Caitlin Marks, NCDOT  
Ms. Marla Watson, SCDOT  
Mr. Yolanda Morris, FHWA  
Mr. Kevin Blayton  
Mr. Jerome Pearson  
Ms. Kelly Mezzapelli  
Mr. Andy Markunas  
Mr. Orlando Arteaga  
Ms. Holly Richardson  
Ms. Leah Quattlebaum  
Mr. David Gray  
Mr. Kevin Parks  
Ms. Sandra Yudice  
Mr. David Schwerd  
Ms. Shamika Peterson

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Mr. Tom Stickler  
Mr. Darryl Elliott  
Ms. Rebecca Bova  
Mr. John Cook  
Ms. Erin Porter  
Mr. Marty Cook  
Ms. Chris Sokolowski  
Mr. Tyler Tulanian  
Mr. Jason Werner  
Mr. Joe Kunkel

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## **Adoption of the Agenda**

Chairman Stephen Goldfinch called the meeting to order at 10:35 AM. It was noted that a quorum was present.

Chairman Goldfinch called for a vote to adopt the meeting agenda. **All members present voted in favor.**

## **Adoption of Minutes from February 14, 2020**

The minutes from the February 14, 2020 GSATS Policy Committee meeting were presented for approval. Chairman Goldfinch called for a vote to approve the minutes. **All members present voted in favor.**

## **Public Comment**

Chairman Goldfinch asked if there were any members of the public who signed up to address the committee during the public comment portion of the meeting. There were no members of the public who provided comments.

## **Projects Update (SCDOT)**

Mr. Stacey Johnson, Assistant Program Manager with SCDOT, provided an update on the status of current and upcoming projects in the region. Of particular note are the following:

- The **SC 65** widening project is nearing completion.
- The **US 17 Business Access Management** Project in Surfside Beach is nearing completion.
- The **US 501 SB** widening project let date has been moved to October 2020.
- Final construction plans for the **US 17 widening from Shetland Lane to the Backgate Interchange** are underway.
- The **Black River Road** widening project's status has not changed since the meeting in February. A meeting with the City of Georgetown, the Georgetown Memorial Hospital, GSATS, and SCDOT is currently planned for the fall of 2020 to discuss the utility impacts of the project.
- Preliminary engineering is underway for intersection improvements at **Tournament Boulevard and McDowell Shortcut**.
- Final construction plans for the **S-57 and S-111** intersection project are being developed. It is anticipated that it will let in February of 2021.
- Preliminary engineering of the **Riverwood Dr. / Old Kings Hwy** project is underway.
- The **US 17 and 27<sup>th</sup> Avenue South** project (North Myrtle Beach) and the **US 378 and 16<sup>th</sup> Avenue** (Conway) project are in their early stages of design.
- The **River Oaks Multiuse Path** is waiting to be let and the **Grand Park Linear Trail** is waiting to be re-let to construction. The Grand Park Linear Trail is currently being advertised by the City of Myrtle Beach.

- The **SC 707 and Glens Bay Road** projects are fully complete and will be removed from the list.
- The consultants for the **Carolina Bays** extension project are reviewing public comments from the meetings in December and are in the process of narrowing down the alternatives to potentially seven for further analysis.
- Right-of-way plans for the **US 501 Corridor Improvements** are underway.
- Right-of-way plans for the **SC 9 East of Loris** widening project are underway.
- The acquisition of right-of-way phase has started for **US 701 North of Conway** widening project.
- The preparation of right-of-way plans for the **Forestbrook Road** widening project are in progress and should be finished by the beginning of next year.
- The right-of-way acquisition for the **Fred Nash Boulevard** widening project is planned to start next month.
- The second public input meeting for the **US 17 Business Intersections in Garden City** project is scheduled to occur in mid to late August. The plan is host the meeting virtually. The Tadlock Drive intersection has been added to the project due to its proximity to the other proposed intersection improvements.
- Right-of-way plans for the **US 701 North of Loris** widening project are being finalized. The acquisition phase is planned to start next month.
- Right-of way plans are being finalized for the **US 501 Realignment in Myrtle Beach**. The acquisition phase is planned to start in the fall of 2020.
- Right-of way plans are being finalized for the **Conway Perimeter** project. The acquisition phase is planned to start in early 2021.
- Negotiations are underway with the **Southern Evacuation Lifeline** consultant that was selected to perform the preliminary engineering and design.

Below is a summary submitted by Mr. Johnson of all other projects within the GSATS Study Area.

**GRAND STRAND AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY**

**JULY 31, 2020**

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING**

**PROJECT STATUS REPORT**

**GSATS PROJECTS**

**SC-65 Widening**

Descr: Widening SC-65 from a two lane ditch section to a three lane section with curb and gutter and sidewalks extending from 17<sup>th</sup> Ave S. to 28<sup>th</sup> Ave. S.

Status: Project is nearing completion of construction.

**US 17 Business Access Management**

Descr: Install raised landscaped median on US 17 Business within the town limits of Surfside Beach.

Status: Project is nearing completion of construction.

### **US 501 Southbound Widening**

Descr: Widening US 501 southbound from two to three lanes from Carolina Bays Parkway to Gardner Lacy Road, a distance of approximately 2.0 miles.

Status: Final plans are complete and project is set to be Let in October 2020.

### **US 17 Widening (Shetland to Backgate Interchange)**

Descr: Widening US 17 from four to six lanes from Shetland Lane to Backgate Interchange, a distance of approximately 1.5 miles.

Status: Final construction plans are being developed.

### **Black River Road Widening**

Descr: Widening Black River Road to three lanes from Willow Bank Road to Landgrave Street, a distance of less than 0.5 mile.

Status: Preliminary engineering is underway. Utility impacts are being evaluated.

### **Tournament Boulevard and McDowell Shortcut (Round 3 Intersection Improvement)**

Descr: Intersection Improvement at Tournament Blvd and McDowell Shortcut in Horry County.

Status: Preliminary engineering is underway.

### **S-57 & S-111 (Round 3 Intersection Improvement)**

Descr: Intersection Improvement at S-57 (Wampee Rd) and S-111 (Little River Road) in Horry County.

Status: Final construction plans are being developed.

### **Riverwood Dr. & Old Kings Hwy (Round 3 Intersection Improvement)**

Descr: Intersection Improvement at Riverwood Dr and Old Kings Hwy in Georgetown County.

Status: Preliminary engineering is underway.

### **US 17 & 27<sup>th</sup> Ave (Round 3 Intersection Improvement)**

Descr: Intersection Improvement at US 17 BUS (North Kings Hwy) and 27<sup>th</sup> Ave North in Horry County

Status: Surveys, environmental studies and traffic analysis are currently underway.

### **US 378 & 16<sup>th</sup> Ave (Round 3 Intersection Improvement)**

Descr: Intersection Improvement at US 378 (Wright Blvd) and 16<sup>th</sup> Ave in Horry County.

Status: Surveys, environmental studies and traffic analysis are currently underway.

### **Enhancements**

Descr: Enhancements at various locations in the GSATS study area.

Status: Specific information is presented below for all projects currently under development:

#### River Oaks Multiuse Path

Project is waiting to be let for construction.

#### Grand Park Linear Trail

Project is waiting to be re-let for construction.

### **NON-GUIDESHARE PROJECTS**

#### **Carolina Bays Parkway (SC-31) Extension to NC State Line (RIDE III)**

Descr: Extension of the Carolina Bays Parkway from its current terminus at SC Route 9 across the North Carolina state line to US 18. The proposed project is a new location, multilane freeway facility.

Status: The project team is working towards narrowing the conceptual corridors to a few reasonable corridors that will continue to be further studied during the project development process.

#### **US 501 Corridor Improvements (RIDE III)**

Descr: Widen US 501 from Gardner Lacy to SC 544 Interchange. Widening the existing 4-lane section to 6 lanes and improve signalized intersections with additional turn lanes and storage lengths.

Status: Efforts are underway on the completion of right-of-way plans.

#### **SC Highway 9 Widening (East of Loris) (RIDE III)**

Descr: Widen SC 9 for approximately 1.25 miles beginning east of Loris where the current 4-lane section terminates and extends to SC-66 (SC Highway 66); traffic analyses will determine the typical section for capacity and safety improvements along the corridor.

Status: Efforts are underway on the completion of right-of-way plans and the environmental document.

#### **US 701 Widening (North of Conway) (RIDE III)**

Descr: Widen existing US Highway 701 North of Conway in Horry County from the intersection of SC 319 to the intersection of SC 22. The length of the project is approximately 4.3 miles. The proposed design includes widening US 701 to a five (5) lane section and including bike/pedestrian facilities such as sidewalks and wider travel lanes where feasible.

Status: Plans are being finalized and right-of-way acquisition is underway.

### **Forestbrook Road Widening (RIDE III)**

Descr: Widen Forestbrook Road (S-137) to a five lane section from US 501 to Dick Pond Road (S-616) with associated improvements to Dick Pond Road.

Status: Efforts are underway on the completion of right-of-way plans and the environmental document.

### **Fred Nash Boulevard Widening and Extension (RIDE III)**

Descr: Widen Fred Nash Boulevard to a three lane section and extend the roadway from its current termini to a proposed intersection with Harrelson Boulevard. Improvements will include bicycle facilities.

Status: Plans are being finalized and right-of-way phase of work is expected to begin in the fall of 2020. Efforts are underway to complete the environmental document.

### **US 17 BUS Intersections in Garden City (RIDE III)**

Descr: Intersection Improvements to the following three (3) intersections along US 17 Business in Garden City:

1. US 17 Business and Inlet Square Boulevard and Mt. Gilead Road
2. US 17 Business and Atlantic Avenue
3. US 17 Business and Garden City Connector

Status: The project team is reevaluating the proposed designs. A second public information meeting will be held in the spring to present revised plans.

### **US 701 Widening (North of Loris) (RIDE III)**

Descr: Widen US 701 for approximately 1.75 miles from Holly Street to SC Highway 9. A traffic analysis will determine the typical section for capacity and safety improvements along the corridor.

Status: Right-of-way plans are being finalized and the right-of-way phase of work is anticipated to begin in the summer of 2020.

### **US 501 Realignment (Myrtle Beach) (RIDE III)**

Descr: Realign US Highway 501 from Broadway Street (local) to 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue North (local) in the City of Myrtle Beach.

Status: Right-of-way plans have been reviewed and comments are being addressed by the design team.

### **Conway Perimeter Road Phase II (RIDE III)**

Descr: New Location 4-lane divided roadway west of Conway connecting US 378 at El Bethel Road to US 701.

Status: Efforts are underway on the preparation of right-of-way plans and the completion of the environmental document.

### **Southern Evacuation Lifeline (SELL) (RIDE III)**

Descr: New Location freeway from US 501 at SC 22 to US 17 near the Horry/Georgetown County Line. RIDE III funding only includes the Environmental Document and purchase of some right-of-way based on final alignment determined through the Federal Record of Decision (ROD).

Status: Negotiations are underway with the consultant that has been selected to perform the preliminary environmental studies and design efforts for the project.

## **STATE TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE BANK (STIB) PROJECTS**

### **Carolina Bays Parkway (SC Route 31) Extension**

Descr: Extension of the Carolina Bays Parkway from its current terminus at SC Route 544 to SC Route 707, a distance of approximately 4.3 miles. The proposed project is a new location, multilane freeway facility that will include a bridge over the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway and interchanges at SC Route 544 and SC Route 707.

Status: Final punch list items are currently being addressed.

### **Projects Update (NCDOT)**

Ms. Caitlin Marks provided an overview of project updates impacting the NC portion of the GSATS study area. Ms. Marks stated that she has been working with NCDOT to change their STIP due to budgetary problems which has resulted in project suspensions. She noted that the Carolina Bays project has not been suspended so that both states could continue to move forward on the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Caitlin Marks at the Division 3 Office: (910) 341-2000 or [cmmarks@ncdot.gov](mailto:cmmarks@ncdot.gov)

Chairman Goldfinch thanked Mr. Johnson and Ms. Marks for their presentations and asked Mr. Johnson to further explain the Tournament Boulevard and McDowell Shortcut project details. Mr. Johnson explained that the final right-of-way plans are expected to be complete by early spring of next year. This fall, a virtual public input meeting is planned during which

the conceptual design will be presented. Chairman Goldfinch asked if the Policy Committee will be able to see the plans prior to the public meeting. Mr. Johnson responded that the committee will have the opportunity to review the plans prior to the meeting and that currently the project is a signalized intersection with Tournament Boulevard having a five lane section connecting the intersection to US 17.

Rep. Russell Fry inquired if the design work schedule for the S-57 and S-111 intersection project shifted. Mr. Johnson replied that the right-of-way plans should be completed by the fall of 2020 and the acquisition phase should begin the spring of 2021. Rep. Fry asked when the Holmestown Road project will start. Mr. Johnson answered that the Holmestown Road project is part of the resurfacing plan and that he will provide the committee with a let date when that is known. Rep. Fry stated that medians in Surfside Beach have overgrown grass that residents are complaining about. Mr. Johnson noted that he will ask SCDOT maintenance Division to look into it. Rep. Fry asked when the US 17 Business Intersections public input meeting will be held. Mr. Johnson replied that it will be held virtually on August 27, 2020. A video of the plans will be posted on the project website prior to the meeting and the public can comment on it. Those comments will then be addressed at the meeting.

Mr. Tony Cox stated that an accident occurred at S-57 and S-111 on Wednesday and asked what the completion date for the project was. Mr. Johnson replied that the project was originally going to take 24 to 36 months and that he had not received a definitive date yet but will inform him when the date is known. Rep. Lee Hewitt inquired if the policy committee could review the plans for the Garden City intersections project prior to it being presented to the public. Mr. Johnson responded that they could. Ms. Sandra Yudice asked when the Black River Road widening meeting will be held. Mr. Johnson answered that he will follow up to schedule that meeting in the fall.

### **SCDOT Safety Audit Projects**

Chairman Goldfinch introduced Mr. Mark Hoeweler to present the projects that were selected following the SCDOT Safety Audit process that occurred in the fall of 2019. Mr. Hoeweler began by noting that the SCDOT Safety Office has conducted five different safety audits in the GSATS region and has allocated funding towards improvements that were identified in the safety audit reports. Mr. Hoeweler mentioned that SCDOT wanted the projects identified in the TIP. Further project details will be provided once they are available. The projects selected are at the following locations:

- The intersection of US 501 and SC 905,
- 21<sup>st</sup> Avenue North in Myrtle Beach,
- US 17 Business in Myrtle Beach
- US 17 in North Myrtle Beach, and
- Mr. Joe White Avenue in the City of Myrtle Beach.

Mr. Hoeweler noted that there is almost \$13 million in funding allocated for the safety projects.

Rep. Fry asked about the safety audit process, and where the project funding will come from. Mr. Hoeweler replied that the SCDOT Safety Office met with local governments, GSATS,

law enforcement, and other stakeholders to locate accident hotspots and to recommend treatments to address the issues. Rep. Fry asked if intersections are typically analyzed.

Chairman Goldfinch called for a motion to approve the SCDOT Safety Audit projects. **Rep. Hewitt made a motion to approve the SCDOT Safety Audit projects as presented on the GSATS TIP. Rep. Fry seconded. All committee members voted in favor.**

### **Transportation Alternatives**

Chairman Goldfinch introduced Mr. Hoeweler to present the Transportation Alternatives. Mr. Hoeweler noted that the transportation alternatives program refer to bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure projects within the GSATS boundary. He mentioned that the Waccamaw Neck Bikeway in North Litchfield and South Strand Rec Center trails are PRT projects funded that SCDOT is requesting GSATS to place in the TIP. Mr. Hoeweler then reviewed the City of Georgetown's East Coast Greenway (ECG) project. The city has declined to move forward with the project which has made \$628,000 available, if the money can be obligated to another project prior to the lapsing date of 09/30/20. He explained that North Myrtle Beach and Horry County have provided an alternative project along Little River Neck Road. The original City of Georgetown ECG project dates back to 2014. Mr. Hoeweler noted that Horry County and North Myrtle Beach are contributing above the 20% funding match (\$350K) to the project and that the project is currently receiving public comment.

Chairman Goldfinch asked if Georgetown County was asked if they had a project that could use the funding. Mr. Hoeweler replied that every local government was asked if they had a project ready in case the City of Georgetown's project did not come to fruition. Chairman Goldfinch stated that he knew that the Inlet to Intracoastal bike path project in Murrells Inlet could use the funds and asked Mr. John Thomas why that wasn't considered. Mr. Thomas stated that he was unaware of funds being available and thought it was possible that only a subcommittee discussed it and never informed County Council. Chairman Goldfinch stated that the Murrells Inlet project is shovel ready and would have significant matching funds. Mr. Hoeweler emphasized that the funding is lapsing and there is a very tight timeline to try to obligate these funds. Mr. Hoeweler reiterated that every local government in the region was well aware that the potential of the project to not come to fruition was high. Chairman Goldfinch asked if another meeting can be held prior to the September 30 deadline. Mr. Johnson explained that prior to September 30, the project must be approved and placed in the TIP and have a public comment period.

Chairman Goldfinch called for a motion to defer the approval of the transportation alternative projects until the possibility of funding the Inlet to Intracoastal project is explored. **Rep. Hewitt made a motion to defer the transportation alternatives as presented. Rep. Fry seconded. All committee members voted in favor.**

Mr. Hoeweler then provided an update on several TIP projects shown in the spreadsheet. He stated that the Waverly Road and Petigru Drive intersection improvement start date was moved to fiscal year 2028. Mr. Hoeweler then listed the following projects that have been completed and can now be removed from the TIP.

- SC 65 widening through Crescent Beach,
- Waccamaw Elementary School- Safe Routes to School,
- Georgetown County Drainage Project,
- US 501 Bus- Waccamaw River Bridge Rehab- Horry County,
- US 17- US 17 Bus Bridge Rehab- Horry County, and
- Withers Swash- Bridge Replacement- Horry County.

Mr. Hoeweler noted other changes that were made to the following projects: The West of the Waterway Parkway Project is being moved to fiscal year 2028 in the amount of \$250,000. The Georgetown County Corridor Study, \$35,000 was added to create a visualization of the proposed changes that will be shown on the website when completed. The pedestrian safety improvements for the SC 544 corridor near Coastal Carolina University campus is now included in the TIP. Finally, the SCDOT Safety Audit Projects were added to the TIP.

Chairman Goldfinch called for a motion to approve the TIP Update. **Rep. Hewitt made a motion to approve the TIP Update as presented. Mr. Cox seconded. All committee members voted in favor.**

### **Transit 5310 Recommendations**

Chairman Goldfinch called Ms. Elizabeth Tucker to provide an update on the Transit 5310 program. Ms. Tucker reminded the committee that the 5310 FTA grant is intended to provide transit services for the elderly and for disabled persons. Ms. Tucker then reviewed the four applications that were received.

- Horry County asked for funds to purchase two new vans,
- Brunswick Senior Resources was interested in purchasing service from Brunswick Transit.
- Neighbor to Neighbor has applied for mobility management funding. Ms. Tucker stated that Horry County and Brunswick Senior Resource will be fully funded and a Neighbor to Neighbor will be partially funded due to the limited amount of funds available. There was a public comment period during which no comments were received.

Mr. Darrell Eickhoff asked if Ms. Tucker received Coast RTA's request for funds for the purchase of three new paratransit vehicles. Ms. Tucker replied that she did not receive any requests from Coast RTA for this round.

Chairman Goldfinch called for a motion to approve the Transit 5310 Recommendations. **Rep. Hewitt made a motion to approve the Transit 5310 Recommendations as presented. Rep. Fry seconded. All committee members voted in favor.**

### **Adjourn**

With no further discussion Chairman Goldfinch called for an adjournment. **All members present voted in favor. The meeting adjourned at 11:40 AM.**

Respectfully Submitted,



GSATS Chairman, Sen. Stephen Goldfinch

12-FEB 2021

Date