

**MINUTES**  
**SUATS POLICY COMMITTEE**  
**THURSDAY, APRIL 1, 2021 @ 11:30 A.M.**  
**CONDUCTED VIA VIDEOCONFERENCE**

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:** The Honorable Mayor **David P. Merchant**; Chairman; County Council Chairman **James T. McCain, Jr.**; Sumter CTC Chairman **Hugh M. McLaurin, IV**; State Senator **J. Thomas McElveen, III**; City Councilman **Thomas J. Lowery**; and Sumter Economic Development Board President & CEO **Jay Schwedler** and Sumter City Manager **Deron McCormick**,

**POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT:** County Councilman **James Byrd, Jr.**, State Representative **G. Murrell Smith**, State Representative **J. David Weeks**; Shaw Air Force Base Commander Col. **Derek O'Malley**, SCDOT 5<sup>th</sup> District Commissioner **David E. "Gene" Branham**, Planning Commission Chairman **Jim Crawley**, Sumter County Administrator **Gary Mixon**, and SCDOT 6<sup>th</sup> District Commissioner **John Barnwell Fishburne**.

**OTHERS PRESENT:** (See sign-in sheet)

**STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT:** Senior Planner **Kyle Kelly** and Executive Assistant **Kellie Chapman**

A meeting of the Sumter Area Transportation Study (SUATS) Policy Committee was held on Thursday, April 1, 2021, at 11:30 a.m. via Videoconference. Chairman David P. Merchant called the meeting to order.

A motion to approve the agenda as amended for the April 1, 2021 meeting was made by Mr. Schwedler and seconded by Mr. Lowery. The motion carried via unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes from the February 26, 2021 meeting was made by Mr. McLaurin and seconded by Mr. Schwedler. The motion carried via unanimous vote.

**Amendment #7 to SUATS Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)**

Mr. Kelly advised the Committee that in support the objective of the LRTP to capture specific projects to achieve the plan's overall vision and to keep the inventory of future projects accurate and up-to-date, an amendment is presented to the current 2045 LRTP to establish a traffic calming and road diet project category, containing twenty-four (24) projects, TC.1 through TC.24.

Mr. Kelly then briefed the Committee on traffic calming strategies. Traffic calming uses physical design and other measures to improve safety for motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. Tools are used to combat speeding and other unsafe behaviors of drivers in neighborhoods. Traffic calming aims to encourage safer, more responsible driving and potentially reduce traffic flow. Many individual strategies for traffic calming include narrowed road lanes, medians, and streetscapes.

Mr. Kelly mentioned that a Road Diet is generally described as “removing travel lanes from a roadway and utilizing the space for other uses and travel modes.” The most common Road Diet reconfiguration is the conversion of an undivided four lane roadway to a three-lane undivided roadway made up of 2 through lanes and a center two-way left-turn lane. Also, the reduction of lanes allows the roadway cross section to be reallocated for others uses such as bike lanes, pedestrian refuge island, transit uses, and/or parking.

Staff recommended that the Policy Committee adopt proposed Amendment #7 to the 2045 SUATS Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and open a 30-day public comment period.

A motion to adopt Amendment #7 to the 2045 SUATS Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) subject to a 30-day public comment period was made by Mr. Schwedler and seconded by Mr. McCain. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

### **Amendment #3 to FY2021-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Kelly briefed the Committee on the proposed inclusion of a West Liberty Street Road Diet Project into the FY2021-2027 TIP with a Planning Phase in the amount of \$100,000. Requested funds would be used to implement a ‘road diet’ on West Liberty St. between Sumter St. and Alice Dr. This project would consist of reducing the number of travel lanes and improvements to pedestrian and bike infrastructure by significantly widening sidewalks from +/- 4 ½ ft. to +/- 10 ft.

Mr. Kelly stated that staff recommends that the Policy Committee approved the Amendment #3 to FY2021-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and open a 21-day public comment period.

A motion to adopt Amendment #3 to FY2021-2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) subject to a 21-day public comment period was made by Mr. McCain and seconded by Mr. McElveen. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

### **Federal Surface Transportation Bill and Earmark Funding**

Mr. Kelly briefed that the most recent Federal Surface Transportation Bill, the Fixing America’s Surface Transportation Act (FAST Act), is set to expire on September 30, 2021. The original authorization for the FAST Act provided \$305 billion over fiscal years 2016 through 2020 for highway, highway and motor vehicle safety, public transportation, motor carrier safety, hazardous materials safety, rail, and research, technology, and statistics programs. This process, known as “earmarks”, was ended in 2007, but is being re-engaged as a budgeting and appropriations tool by Congress this year. Staff is preparing submissions through the City of Sumter for transportation-related earmarks for Manning Avenue Bridge Pedestrian Enhancements and for the West Liberty Street Road Diet.

### **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.

With no further business, Mr. McCain made a motion to adjourn the meeting at approximately 4:00 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lowery and carried unanimously.

Respectfully submitted,

*Kellie K. Chapman*

Kellie K. Chapman  
Board Secretary