

MINUTES
SUATS POLICY COMMITTEE
FRIDAY, JUNE 26, 2026, @ 12:00 P.M.
SANTEE WATEREE RTA BUILDING – MEETING ROOM
(129 SOUTH HARVIN ST., SUMTER, SC)

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT: The Honorable Mayor **David P. Merchant**; *Sumter* Economic Development Board President & CEO **Jay Schwedler**; State Senator **Jeff Zell**; State Representative **J. David Weeks**; Planning Commission Chairman **James Munford**; County Council Chairman **James T. McCain**; County Councilman **James Byrd, Jr.**; Sumter County Manager **Gary Mixon (non-voting)**; Shaw Air Force Base Planner **Ashley Nichols (non-voting)** **SCDOT Commissioner**, and Sumter City Manager **Deron McCormick (non-voting)**.

POLICY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ABSENT Sumter CTC Chairman **Hugh M. McLaurin, IV**; City Councilman **Colin Davis**; State Representative **G. Murrell Smith**; 5th District **Curtis Spencer (non-voting)**; and **SWRTA Executive Director Tanisha Gibbons (non-voting)** and SCDOT 6th District Commissioner **Linious Martin Sauls, VI. (non-voting)**.

OTHERS PRESENT: (See sign-in sheet)

STAFF MEMBERS PRESENT: Senior Planner **Kyle Kelly**, Planning Director **Helen Roodman** and Executive Assistant **Kellie Chapman**.

A meeting of the Sumter Area Transportation Study (SUATS) Policy Committee was held on Friday, June 26, 2026, @ 12:00 p.m. in Santee Wateree RTA Building – Meeting Room (129 South Harvin St., Sumter, SC). Chairman McCain called the meeting to order.

A motion to approve the agenda for the June 26, 2026, meeting was made by County Councilmen Bryd and seconded by Mr. Munford. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

A motion to approve the minutes from April 24, 2025, meeting was made by Mr. Schwedler and seconded by County Councilmen Bryd. The motion carried a unanimous vote.

Old Business

Amendment #6 to 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Mr. Kelly stated since adoption of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan in late 2023, SUATS staff has kept a log of corridors, intersections, and sidewalk segments of need that were not included in the LRTP's projects listings. In October 2025, 1 corridor project, 11 intersection projects, and 3 sidewalk projects were incorporated into the LRTP. Subsequent to that inclusion, and based on research and input from the public, staff has developed a listing of additional project inclusions and corrections for Policy Committee consideration, as follows:

- **Proposed Adjustment of Termini for 1 Corridor Improvement**
 - Project #O-19 – Patriot Parkway Corridor from Broad St. to Loring Mill Rd.
- **Proposed Addition of 4 Intersection Improvements**
 - Project #IO-12 – Patriot Parkway at Loring Mill Rd. and Wise Dr.
 - Project #IO-13 – Pocalla Rd. at Pack Rd.
 - Project #IS-34 – Patriot Parkway at N. Saint Paul’s Church Rd.
 - Project #IS-35 – Camden Hwy at Charles Jackson St.
- **Proposed Addition of 1 Sidewalk Improvement**
 - Project #SW-40 – Peach Orchard Rd. from Broad St. to Thistledown Dr.
(both sides of road)

A motion to adopt Amendment #6 to 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) subject to completion of a 21-day public comment period as required by the SUATS Public Participation Plan was made by County Councilman Bryd and was seconded by State Representative Weeks. The vote carried an unanimous vote.

Broad St. at Loring Mill Rd. Intersection Improvement Project

Mr. Kelly added in 2020, SUATS began studying the feasibility of intersection improvements for the 4 highest ranked intersections identified in the 2045 SUATS Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

These intersections were:

- 1) Broad St. at N. Saint Paul’s Church Rd.
- 2) N. Guignard Dr. at W. Liberty St.
- 3) Broad St. at Loring Mill Rd.
- 4) Broad St. at Robert Dinkins Rd.

Following completion of the feasibility studies in June 2021, the SUATS Policy Committee voted to fund improvements to 3 of the 4 intersections using the MPO’s Regional Mobility Program. (The 4th intersection, N. Guignard Dr. at W. Liberty St., was incorporated into the separate W. Liberty St. corridor project).

Since that programming decision, SCDOT developed the Broad St. at Loring Mill Rd. project through right-of-way plans (60% plans), and the agency has acquired necessary right-of-way for the proposed improvements.

In 2025, it was identified that the actual cost to relocate a City of Sumter-owned water utility line in the project area would exceed the City’s means. Because the City of Sumter is not considered a “small utility” under SCDOT’s utility relocation policies, the City is not eligible for the cost of utility relocation to be borne by the project. A further complication is that a separate water utility (High Hills Rural Water Company) *is* eligible for full reimbursement of relocation costs for their infrastructure, which reduces the pool of funds available to partially offset the City’s costs.

Acting on this information, staff conducted a re-evaluation of the purpose and need basis

for the Broad St. at Loring Mill Rd. intersection. Unexpectedly, and in a departure from the other intersections advanced from the 2045 LRTP, crashes at the Broad St. at Loring Mill Rd. intersection dropped by nearly 50% from the 2015-2019 period (59 crashes) to 2020-2024 period (31 crashes). The intersection is now ranked #57 among SUATS intersections based on the last 3 years of data (2022-2024) and is ranked #69 based on SCDOT's new predictive network screening tool, which utilizes 2020-2024 data. There have been no fatal crashes and only 1 serious injury crash at the intersection since 2014 based on currently available SCDOT/SCDPS data.

Though a causative relationship is unconfirmed, staff believes that there is a correlation between the improvement to the intersection's safety performance and a pair of separately implemented SCDOT maintenance projects, specifically resurfacing of the westbound portion of Broad St. in the area of the intersection as well as upgrades to signal equipment at the intersection.

Staff recommends that the Policy Committee delay the construction phase for the Broad St. at Loring Mill Rd. intersection improvements to FY2033 (the final year of the current SUATS TIP timeline). While failure to implement the project within 20 years would result in a requirement for SUATS to repay funds expended on right-of-way acquisition to FHWA, staff believes that improvements to the intersection are a matter of when, and not if, between now and 2044.

A motion to delay the construction phase for the Broad St. at Loring Mill Rd. intersection improvements to FY2033 (the final year of the current SUATS TIP timeline), subject to completion of a 21-day public comment period as required by the SUATS Public Participation Plan was made by Mayor Merchant and was seconded by Mr. Schwedler. The vote carried an unanimous vote.

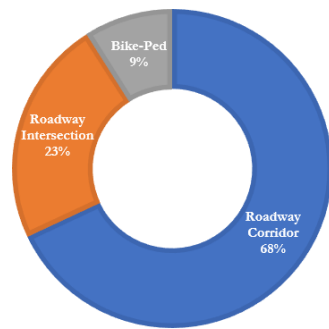
Old Business – Info Items

2050 LRTP Project(s) to be Funded via SUATS Regional Mobility Program (RMP)

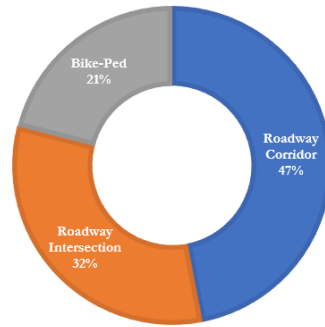
Mr. Kelly stated SUATS currently has a projected \$35.7 million balance available during the FY2024-2033 TIP window. While remaining phases for existing projects (e.g. W. Liberty Street Corridor and Turkey Creek Greenway Phase 1) and possible inflationary cost impacts to active projects are likely to require commitment of a portion of these available funds, there are opportunities to begin planning a next SUATS Regional Mobility Program project.

The current SUATS 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan separates projects into three primary categories to enable effective ranking within each category. During the planning horizon of the LRTP, the expected division of funds in these categories compared to the actual allocation in the diagram below:

Planned vs. Actual Regional Mobility Program Allocations



% OF TOTAL ALLOCATION
(ACTUAL)



% OF TOTAL RMP ALLOCATION
(DESIRED)

The project ranking system established in the LRTP is by its nature reactive to previously measured data in identifying areas to be addressed on Sumter's transportation network. This means that projected or planned development (commercial, industrial, and residential) can create an impact on Sumter's transportation network that is not included in available data or effectively scored via the project prioritization rubric.

In situations involving new growth where Sumter's transportation needs can be best served by selecting a project ranked lower on the project list, the SUATS Policy Committee may make project selection based on additional information (e.g. traffic impact studies, details on new developments) that becomes available once new commercial, industrial, or residential development is planned.

Staff presented this information for the Policy Committee's consideration and discussion. No action was required or taken.

Active Projects Update

Mr. Kelly provided a status update on the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Safety Action Plan in development using federal grant funding.

Mr. Kelly provided a status update on current area transportation improvement projects funded via the Sumter Penny for Progress sales tax initiative and SUATS Regional Mobility Program. The briefing focused on the implementation schedules for each major phase of work.

Respectfully submitted,

Kellie K. Chapman

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Board Secretary