

FLATS POLICY COMMITTEE MEETING
February 19, 2010
APPROVED MINUTES

Voting Members Present:

Senator Hugh Leatherman
Councilman Billy D. Williams
Representative Kris Crawford
Sherwin Welch
Mayor Stephen Wukela
Commissioner Marvin Stevenson
Councilman Morris Anderson
Mayor Ashby Gregg

Non-Voting Members Present:

Kevin Griffin
Janice Baroody
Peter Knoller
Glynn Willis
David Williams

Study Team Members Present:

Michelle James, SCDOT
Phil Goff, PDCOG
Kevin Sheppard, SCDOT
Brenda Perryman, SCDOT
Michael Bethea, SCDOT
Shane Belcher, FHWA
Herb Cooper, SCDOT

Staff Present:

Scott Park
Debi Matthews
Renee Proctor

Senator Leatherman called the meeting to order.

The first item of business on the agenda was to approve the minutes from the previous meeting. Minutes were unanimously approved.

The second item of business: Updates from the CTC, PDCOG, PDRTA and SCODT:

- Sherwin Welch updated the committee for the CTC. Money has been tight. At their last two quarterly meetings, they allocated \$2,825,000 throughout Florence County for repaving and repairing streets. This still leaves outstanding, \$1,860,000 from previous meetings to be finished. A few of the projects include Douglas Street, National Cemetery Rd. and Lake City roads coming into the Technology Center where new industry will soon locate.
- Janice Baroody updated the committee for PDRTA. The urbanized area continues to grow. They have seen an approximate 40% increase in passenger trips. Beginning in March, they will be offering Saturday services. They recently received their next urban appropriation and along with that they were awarded additional funds through the STIC, which is the Small Transit Intensive City. PDRTA was the only transit system in the State to receive any of those awards because of the standards that they meet. On the paratransit side, they are seeing more paying passengers as opposed to contract passengers. They will be

starting university services with FMU in late fall of 2010 or early spring of 2011 connecting the Performing Arts Center with the main campus.

- Phil Goff with the PDCOG updated the committee for the six counties in the Pee Dee. Their TIP includes resurfacing projects along with region wide transit serviced by PDRTA. There are 4 projects funded in part:
 - The investigations of alternate routes for SC9 in Chesterfield County (preliminary engineering has been funded for a 15 mile road section, however PE will not be done on this project for another couple of years);
 - SC9 two mile bypass around Bennettsville has been funded and is nearing completion;
 - SC41 from the bridges at Johnsonville to Hwy. 378 is funded. Construction should begin late 2010 or early 2011. (1 mile widening to four lane;
 - US 52 will be done in two phases. First phase will be the replacement of the bridge at Black Creek near Dovesville and about a mile of roadway in that vicinity including the Nucor Steel intersection. Phase II will be the rest of the five mile section to begin in the next two years.

Senator Leatherman asked Mr. Goff if he had been advised on any of the projects PDCOG submitted to be funded from the next possible stimulus money. Mr. Goff advised that the stimulus funds required projects to be shovel ready. This has been a problem in the Pee Dee due to design and right-of-way, so they have not heard anything back on this.

Senator Leatherman asked if there is anyway DOT and/or Commissioners could identify projects and at least get preliminary engineering done.

Commissioner Nuckles advised, when they heard of the possibility of the second stimulus, they asked staff to check with all of the MPO's and COG's for their feedback. There is a 90 day ready-to-go deadline for the 1st half of the money and a 9 month ready-to-go deadline for the 2nd half. However, as of yesterday, Congress still has not heard a confirmation on the stimulus. Commissioner Nuckles advised if this 2nd stimulus comes through, she has designated \$6,000,000 for the Hwy. 52 project mentioned by Mr. Goff. This would free up the guideshares and get back on the I-95/327 project again.

- Michelle James with SCDOT updated the committee on the status of the one-cent sales tax projects and FLATS projects. For the one-cent sales tax projects:
 - Pine Needles –They should secure a completion contract within the coming weeks to replace the prime contractor that went out of business. The bridge sub-contractor has continued working. Hopefully, they will be able to maintain schedule.

Senator Leatherman advised committee and public that all state highway projects must be bonded, which means if the contractor has financial problems, the state makes sure it is completed by the bond. This project will be completed.

Councilman Anderson asked when the project would be rebid. Ms. James advised they will open the bids on March 2nd at 5 p.m. and let (*editor's note* – or contract) the project. There were eight contractors to attend the pre-bid conference. Representative Crawford asked how long after the opening of the bids would it be awarded. Ms. James could not give a definite date. Representative Crawford asked Ms. James to carry back this committee's pointed interest that it not take any longer than absolutely necessary. Sherwin Welch asked Ms. James to e-mail him the updates on this project so he could answer the residents as he receives inquiries. Mayor Wukela asked what the completion date would be once the contract is awarded. Ms. James said their hope is to maintain the previous schedule of completion in fall of 2011.

- US378 – They have completed the public hearing and the environmental document has been signed and sealed. They are at the early stages of R/O/W acquisition;
- US76 – Florence County Council approved to shift the alignment slightly south at the bridge. The purpose of this was to minimize r/o/w impacts and use more of the existing r/o/w. R/O/W plans are currently being reviewed internally and they hope to begin the r/o/w acquisition process this spring;
- TV Road – They had the initial public meeting back in October. There was a lot of interest for sidewalks on Wilson Road where that project begins. They have looked into this and County Council is going to meet on this and advise SCDOT. The environmental studies are underway. They anticipate beginning r/o/w acquisition this fall;

Councilman Williams advised he had just learned today that resurfacing the portion from Lucas Street to Wilson Road is not included in the one cent project and would like to know what can be done to get this portion resurfaced. Ms. James stated that their maintenance department handles the resurfacing, so it's possible it is on a list to be done with the 2nd stimulus funding if it comes through and she will check and advise Mr. Williams.

- SC51 – The other projects have been developed according to State Standards from an environmental standpoint, which means there is a lot less review process from the Federal side. For this project, Florence County Council is thinking there may be a funding shortfall, so they would like to develop it according to Federal Standards. That may introduce some timing issues to get the document and permits approved. Anticipating that the schedule will remain in tack. They are currently getting survey information. Sections 1 & 2 are complete and getting survey data now on sections 3 & 4. They have scheduled a public information meeting for the entire corridor for March 4th.

(Per e-mail from Michelle James to Scott Park on Monday, 2/22/10, the corrected date is April 8th.)

Sherwin Welch asked if any stimulus money would be coming in for SC51. Ms. James advised that the ARRA2 (*editor's note* – second federal Stimulus round) cut-off point will occur well before this project would have to be shovel ready and this project would not be ready to receive these funds.

Senator Leatherman asked if the one cent tax is coming in as predicted. Ms. James advised per the County Administrator it is.

Senator Leatherman also asked how much additional time is going to be involved to develop by Federal Standards versus State? Ms. James said they typically allow from 1-2 years for that process, which is from the time that they have plans developed to be reviewed and a document could be packaged and then presented to the Feds for their review. The biggest issue with 51 is whether they can establish a logical termini. If they can do that, they should be able to approve an earlier document and develop lesser plans for a specific mileage section instead of the entire 24 mile corridor. This would be something SCDOT would have to justify to FHWA. If they stay with the state plan, they do not have to justify that to FHWA.

Senator Leatherman said he would urge Florence County to stay with the state plan.

- 301 By-Pass – Project is inactive based on their projections that the money will run before this project can be started.

Senator Leatherman asked Ms. James for SCDOT to go ahead and identify to route and if more funds are needed, he does not mind going back to the State Infrastructure Bank and ask for more money if funds are available.

Councilman Anderson asked how long the current one cent tax would be in affect and do we have the opportunity to renew it. Senator Leatherman said it's either 7 years or when it generates \$148,000,000. Then the voters could choose if they wanted another tax.

For FLATS projects, Ms. James continued:

- South Cashua – Initially they looked at a 5 lane widening. Based on the studies, 30 r/o/w relocations would be necessary, which per mile, per impact, is over what they would feel comfortable doing. However, the 5 lane would achieve a LOS 'B', which would definitely improve traffic. Next they looked at a 3 lane section, which would reduce the r/o/w impacts by two thirds, but it would only achieve a LOS 'D', which they could not justify based on capacity. The entire corridor is showing a LOS 'E', which is almost at capacity. SCDOT has looked at the section from S. Parker and W. McCown (at

the intersection) to US 76. This section is in the horizon year 2035 and if they did nothing to this section would be operating at LOS 'C', which is an acceptable capacity. For the section from SC51 Second Loop to S. Parker and W. McCown, if they did nothing would be an 'F' at 2035. A three lane for the later section would not improve this section, but a 5 lane would put it at a LOS 'B'. Senator Leatherman asked Ms. James to get the committee some numbers on these options and get back with them.

Representative Crawford agreed that the capacity level was not as much of an issue on the north end, but there is an intersection problem at Knollwood. Ms. James will check on this as well and get back with the committee.

The third item of business: Enhancement Projects update from Scott Park:

- Lucas Street Intersection Gateway - The City was approved as the Local Participating Administrator (LPA) and they've signed the contract with the design firm.
- Irby Street Gateway - The City was approved as the LPA and SCDOT is reviewing the Participation Agreement.
- Red Doe Plantation - Archives and History has completed their review. Red Doe and the County will be meeting sometime next week to finalize some other plans.

Councilman Anderson asked if all of the requirements have been met for the Red Doe project. Scott advised an LPA needs to be designated for this project.

Representative Crawford asked who was eligible to be the LPA. Scott advised that would be between SCDOT and the County. Representative Crawford inquired as to the procedure if there is a failure to designate an LPA. Scott advised it would go back before the Study Team with a recommendation back to the Policy Committee.

The next item on the agenda was the Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) update, which shows projections out to 2015. Scott explained each section on the front portion and financial statement. Scott advised one change was needed under the FTA portion. We found out a couple of days ago that we are anticipating new additional funding under FY2011 for \$1.1 million. The public has not seen this yet, so if you do approve the TIP with this addition, we would put this out for the public and it would be contingent upon any significant public comment. This would be added to the TIP as "Bus and Bus Facilities" under this section. The new FTA funding would be an additional vote if you'd like to add it to the TIP document you received initially as recommended by the Study Team.

Mayor Wukela asked what affect the delay of the reauthorization of SAFETEA-LU has upon the TIP process. Scott advised it has no affect. As far as we know we will still get our same allocation and guideshares based on previous years.

Sherwin Welch made a motion to approve and Mayor Wukela 2nd motion. Carried unanimously.

Representative Crawford asked if the \$1.1 million could only be used for bus and bus facilities. Ms. Baroody with PDRTA advised that the bus and bus facilities section is for a number of PDRTA projects, but the funds need to be in the TIP so they are shovel ready when the money comes.

Representative Crawford moves addition to that item to the TIP with the contingent of no significant negative comment from the public.

The final item on the agenda was an update on the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Scott introduced Mike Rutkowski with Kimley-Horn and Associates, consultant for this project. Mr. Rutkowski gave a brief PowerPoint presentation on the information that will be included in the plan as a result of public workshops and meetings with Florence residents.

Representative Crawford asked if Mr. Rutkowski could forward the presentation to him and to forward all information to the committee before the next presentation.

Scott advised committee that the 2010 Enhancement Grant was skipped earlier on the agenda. The Study Team has recommended that we hold off on that cycle until the completion of the LRTP. Senator Leatherman asked the committee if there were any objections to the Study Team's recommendation. There were no objections from the committee.

Representative Crawford asked for a follow-up on Mr. Gossett's presentation at the last meeting regarding a list that contained six bridges in Florence County eligible for bridge funds. Ms. James will check on this and advise committee at the next meeting.

Representative Crawford also asked for a follow-up on Derrell Rice's presentation at the last meeting regarding stimulus \$2 million for sidewalks. Kevin Sheppard explained that the \$2 million was distributed between seven districts. The district engineer and his staff looked at their local area and made recommendations to DOT as to where these funds needed to be spent. Michael Bethea added these projects have been started in various locations. Mr. Sheppard will get a list of these projects to Mr. Crawford. Mr. Sheppard also advised if ARRA2 stimulus funds go through, there will be \$14 million to distribute between the seven districts for sidewalk improvements.

Senator Leatherman addressed the audience for public comments. There were none.

Being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.