

2017-2022 TIP

2017-2022 Rural Transportation Improvement Program



Appalachian Council of Governments

ADOPTED June 24, 2016

THIS PAGE IS INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Table of Contents

Purpose.....	1
Background.....	1
State Planning Structure.....	3
Goals.....	4
Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).....	4
Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).....	5
Title VI Compliance.....	5
Financial Constraint.....	6
TIP Period.....	6
Public Participation Process.....	6
Public Transportation.....	6
TIP Amendment Processes and Procedures.....	6
Amendments.....	7
Administrative Modifications (Corrections).....	8
Amendment or Administrative Modification Submittal.....	8
Conclusion.....	9
ACOG Transportation Improvement Program Financial Statement.....	10
Guideshare Program.....	12
PROJECT ACCELERATION.....	13
Debt Service.....	14
ACOG EXISTING GUIDESHARE PROJECTS.....	15
S-61 (Old Post Road) Intersection Improvements (from SC 105 to SC 11).....	16
SC 133 (College Avenue) Railroad Bridge.....	17
ACOG NEW GUIDESHARE INTERSECTION PROJECTS.....	18

US 123 (Clemson Boulevard) @ S-439 (Davis Creek Road)	19
US 29 @ S-146 (Bowlan Road) / S-331 (Old Williamston Road)	20
US 176 (Main Street) @ SC 357 (Depot Street/Holly Springs Road)	21
SC 14 @ Interstate 26 EB and WB Ramps.....	22
US 76 (Clemson Highway) @ S-60 (Welpine Road)	23
SC 24 (West Oak Highway) @ SC 182 (Oakway Road) / S-116 (Oak Creek Road)	24
US 178 (Moorefield Memorial Highway) @ SC 135 (Anderson Highway)	25
SC 59 @ SC 182 / SC 243.....	26
S-37 (J.P Stevens Road) @ S-37 (West Cherry Road) / S-65 (Martin Creek Road)	27
SC 150 (South Limestone Street/Pacolet Highway) @ S-111 (O’Neal Street)	28
SC 28 (Abbeville Highway) @ SC 185 (Due West Highway).....	29
S-97 (Dalrymple Road) @ L-568 (Scotts Bridge Road)	30
ACOG NEW GUIDESHARE RESURFACING PROJECTS	31
US 178 from Pickens County Line to S-29 (Harris Bridge Road)	32
US 178 from GPATS Boundary to Anderson County Line	33
APPENDIX A: ACOG PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN.....	34

Purpose

The South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) is responsible for carrying out the rural transportation planning process for the six-county region of Upstate South Carolina, in partnership with the South Carolina Department of Transportation (SCDOT). The ACOG transportation planning area, which appears in **Map 1**, includes the counties of Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens and Spartanburg. Through this planning process, the ACOG establishes regional goals and objectives, identifies the current condition of the transportation system, provides research and data analysis, identifies and prioritizes transportation needs for input to the Statewide Multi-modal Transportation Plan, State Transportation Improvement Plan (STIP), and the South Carolina Appalachian Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Other responsibilities include the development of a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which is, at a minimum, a 25-year transportation vision for the rural area, and a Rural Planning Work Program (RPWP), which identifies in a single document the annual transportation planning activities that are to be undertaken in support of the goals, objectives, and actions established in the LRTP. The ACOG Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC) provides the forum for cooperative decision making in developing regional transportation plans and programs to meet changing needs. The RTAC is composed of elected and appointed officials and staff representing local governments or agencies having an interest in comprehensive transportation planning.

Background

The SCDOT first began enhancing the statewide planning process and local consultation procedures in response to the directives of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA). A revised process was ultimately implemented following the directives of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) and the adoption of the STIP in 1999. In 2005 the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) was enacted. Representing the largest surface transportation bill in the nation's history, SAFETEA-LU provided for a \$244.1 billion investment. Like TEA-21 before it, SAFETEA-LU provided a foundation for improving transportation safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement and protecting the environment. In March of 2012, Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century (MAP-21) was authorized by Congress and continued similar initiatives laid out by prior authorizations.

December 4, 2015, President Obama signed into law the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or "FAST Act." It is the first law enacted in over ten years that provides long-term funding certainty for surface transportation, meaning States and local governments can move forward with critical transportation projects, like new highways and transit lines, with the confidence that they will have a Federal partner over the long term.

Overall, the FAST Act largely maintains current program structures and funding shares between highways and transit. It is a down-payment for building a 21st century transportation system. The law

approval processes for new transportation projects, providing new safety tools, and establishing new programs to advance critical freight projects.

The FAST Act will continue MAP-21's emphasis on a performance-based approach to transportation decision-making to support the seven national goals of the federal-aid highway program. These seven national performance goals include:

Fundamental change in the process began with a partnership between SCDOT and the ten regional COGs, which have representation from all 46 counties in the state. SCDOT created a Rural System Upgrade Program referred to as guideshares, which includes the federal-aid construction program for the areas outside of the metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). Rural guideshares are allocated to COG regions based on a proportional formula. SCDOT initially prepared a list of potential transportation needs based on travel, congestion, and safety data for each region in the state. In 2014, the SCDOT Commission adopted the Statewide Multi-Modal Transportation Plan. The planning process utilized the COGs to develop regional transportation plans that collectively provided the basis for establishing statewide priorities. Today each COG has transportation functions similar to that of MPOs. A portion of SCDOT's State, Planning, and Research (SPR) funding is allocated to the COGs to facilitate an ongoing rural transportation planning process. Each COG is required to submit a RPWP outlining the planning emphasis areas and planning projects for the year. To help ensure ongoing communications between SCDOT and the ten COGs, Partnering Sessions are held as needed to discuss relevant transportation issues. In addition, SCDOT hosts quarterly COG/MPO Workshops, which offers a technical agenda for staff responsible for the day-to-day planning functions. COG transportation planners also meet several times a year to discuss ongoing programs and collaborative efforts.

State Planning Structure

To facilitate and encourage maximum interaction among these groups and the local community, the ACOG has an adopted committee structure. The Policy Committee (ACOG Board of Directors), as the official decision making body, establishes the policies for the overall conduct of the ACOG, is responsible for the adoption of plans and programs and approves study recommendations. ACOG maintains a Regional Transportation Advisory Committee (RTAC). The Committee was created in 1997 and is comprised of a representative from each county that is a member of the ACOG; Anderson, Cherokee, Greenville, Oconee, Pickens, and Spartanburg Counties. In 2016, the RTAC prioritized future system improvements for FY 2017-2022. The RTAC meets quarterly or as needed to review project status, evaluate proposed modifications to the STIP, update long-range plan and funding priorities, comment on rural functional classification changes, receive input on the rural work programs, and coordinate special studies. The RTAC forwards recommendations for program changes and project prioritization to the Policy Committee (ACOG Board of Directors) for final local approval.

Goals

As established by the Advisory and Policy committees, the long-range transportation goals for the ACOG region are listed below:

1. Identify the current condition of the transportation system.
2. Provide research and data analysis to state and local governments.
3. Assist local governments with transportation and land use planning.
4. Coordinate transit efforts with regional transit authorities and human service providers.
5. Identify and prioritize transportation needs for input to the Statewide Multi-Modal Transportation Plan and STIP.
6. Implement a transportation planning process that fully complies with the federal planning requirements established by the FAST Act.
7. Develop a Rural Planning Work Program (RPWP).

Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

The Safe, Accountable, Flexible, an Efficient Transportation Equity Act-A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU) mandates that the state has a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the rural regions in the state (which includes all areas outside of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, or MPOs). All COGs in South Carolina partner with SCDOT to produce regional long range transportation plans that are compliant with the FAST Act and serve as both state and regional rural transportation planning tools. The ACOG LRTP provides a financially constrained 25-year vision of future transportation improvements. ACOG considers a minimum of seven elements in its long-range plan: system upgrades, intersections, safety, maintenance/resurfacing, signalization, mass transit, and bike and pedestrian facilities. Potential projects are ranked by staff and recommended by the RTAC to the ACOG Board based on funding availability. The ACOG 2040 LRTP was adopted in June 2016, and will be updated every 5 years to reflect changing conditions and new planning principals. The 2006 plan established goals and objectives which form the basis for the initial evaluation of projects submitted for the TIP. The process of undertaking major transportation studies, identifying short and long-range needs and targeting major growth areas in the ACOG region for intensive study has strengthened subsequent programming for the TIP. The entire planning/programming/implementation process is clear-cut and documented and involves input by federal, state, and local governments and the public in the early planning stages, and carries through into TIP programming.

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The 2017-2022 TIP for the ACOG region is a six-year program of transportation capital projects together with a seven-year estimate of transit capital and maintenance requirements. The TIP will be updated as needed, but at least biennially. The ACOG TIP will do the following:

1. Identify transportation improvement projects recommended for advancement during the program years. The projects required are those located within the study area and receiving any Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) or Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funds;
2. Identify the criteria and process for prioritization for inclusion of projects in the TIP and any changes from past TIPs;
3. Create an implementation timeline for projects;
4. Include realistic estimates of total costs and revenue for the program period;
5. List major projects from previous TIPs that were implemented and identify any major delays in planned implementation.

Title VI Compliance

Investments made in the TIP must be consistent with federal Title VI requirements. Title VI prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, income, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. Public outreach to and involvement of individuals in low income and minority communities covered under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act and subsequent Civil Rights Restoration Act, and series of federal statues enacted pertaining to environmental justice, are critical to regional planning and programming decisions. The fundamental principles of environmental justice include:

1. Avoiding, minimizing or mitigating disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects on minority and low-income populations;
2. Ensuring full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision making process; and
3. Preventing the denial, reduction or significant delay in the receipt of benefits by minority populations and low-income communities.
4. The decision process by which new projects are selected for inclusion in the TIP must consider equitable solicitation and selection of project candidates in accordance with federal Title VI requirements.

Financial Constraint

The TIP must be financially constrained, meaning that the amount of funding programmed must not exceed the amount of funding estimated to be available. In developing the 2017-2022 TIP, ACOG has taken into consideration the transportation funding revenues expected to be available during the six years of the TIP (Federal FY 2016-2017 through FY 2021-2022), and has found the 2017-2022 STIP to be financially constrained. Should an action occur in the future that significantly affects the funding of programmed projects in the TIP, ACOG along with its partners and the project sponsors would review the actual impact to the TIP. Appropriate action, such as a possible TIP amendment, addressing the funding of the affected projects would be taken at that time.

TIP Period

The number of years of programming included in the TIP varies by funding source. In the case of some projects, carryover funding from prior TIPs is included and notes as “previous TIP(s) carryover funding.” In some cases, estimated funding for projects in future years is included for information.

Public Participation Process

Engaging the public in the planning process is critical to the success of any transportation plan or program, and it is required by numerous State and Federal laws. Such legislation underscores the need for public participation, calling on COGs to provide citizens, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, private providers of transportation and other interested parties with a reasonable opportunity to participate and comment on transportation plans and programs. ACOG has adopted a Public Participation Plan, which can be found in **Appendix A**.

Public Transportation

In general, the transit projects included in the TIP are operational projects that will maintain transit operations and reduce operating costs within the urbanized and rural area. Emphasis has been placed on those projects that will increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the existing levels and quality of transit service provided within the ACOG region.

TIP Amendment Processes and Procedures

Due to the changing nature of projects as they move through the implementation process, the TIP must be modified following its triennial adoption. These modifications, or amendments, are not routine. ACOG will consider such amendments when the circumstances prompting the change are compelling. Proposed changes will be reviewed by ACOG staff before any actions are considered. All changes must

follow ACOG policies and procedures for amending projects in the TIP (Public Participation Process, Title VI, LRTP consistency, fiscal constraint, etc.) and must be consistent with the rules of the particular funding program involved.

Please note certain project amendments require collaboration with our State and federal review partners. The collaboration occurs through the STIP revision process. Therefore, amendment of the ACOG TIP will follow the quarterly schedule established by SCDOT for revisions to the STIP.

ACOG may receive an amendment request to fund a new project during the two-year TIP cycle. Once new projects proposed for funding are identified, and the funding committed, staff initiates the process to amend the projects and project funding in the TIP. When ACOG is not involved in the programming decision associated with a project, staff relies on project sponsors to initiate a TIP amendment.

If ACOG is aware of new funding mechanisms, staff may alert sponsors of the funding mechanism and request that an amendment be initiated. However, generally it is the responsibility of the project sponsor to initiate amendment requests to add new funding, or make necessary modifications to project scope, cost and schedule, as conditions warrant. All regionally significant transportation projects and all transportation projects requiring a federal action must be included in the TIP. These projects may be added to the TIP at any time, as long as procedures for doing so are consistent with federal requirements for TIP development and approval.

In order to be consistent with the SCDOT's STIP Administration and Coordination Process, ACOG will use the following definitions when considering TIP amendments:

Amendments

Major updates that require ACOG RTAC approval, public comment, demonstration of fiscal constraint and approval of our State and federal partners. Amendments are defined as follows:

- **Adding or Deleting Projects from the TIP:** All new federally funded projects or federally funded projects removed prior to completion must to the approved under this Modification Policy.
- **Cost/Funding Increases:** An amendment is required for any cost/funding increases in excess of \$500,000 if a project is valued at \$5 million dollars or less; or increases in excess of ten (10) percent of the total project value if a project is valued greater than \$5 million dollars.
- **Substantive Scope Changes:** An amendment is required when major or substantive changes occur that may have citizen interest or policy implications. For example, modifications to the number of lanes, typical cross section, termini, and the like. Should the ACOG area be designated as non-attainment, all changes that require a re-demonstration of air quality conformity shall require an amendment.
- **Funding Year Changes:** An amendment is required to shift a phase of work beyond the first four (4) years of the STIP (on a sliding window in the current/present fiscal year at the time of the amendment).

- **Changes in the Funding/Cost Shares:** A change to the percentage of the total project cost paid by each funding partner in excess of twenty-five (25) percent requires an amendment (with the one exception noted in the Administrative Modification policy). In addition, changes in funding source require an amendment.

Administrative Modifications (Corrections)

Minor updates that do not require ACOG RTAC approval or additional public involvement, but are included in TIP revisions and fiscal constraint determination to our State and federal partners. Administrative Modifications are approved by ACOG’s Executive Director and the SCDOT Office of Statewide Planning. Administrative modifications are defined as follows:

Changes that do not impact the overall purpose of the project: Clerical errors or changes to LRTP reference may be approved administratively.

- **Cost/Funding Increases:** Any cost/funding increases less than \$500,000 if a project is valued at \$5 million dollars or less; or increases less than ten (10) percent of the total project value if a project is valued greater than \$5 million dollars, may be approved administratively.
- **Funding Year Changes:** Shifting a phase of work within the first four (4) years of the STIP (on a sliding window in the current/present fiscal year at the time of the amendment) may be approved administratively.
- **Adjustment of Phases:** Combining or separating phases within a project that is part of an approved STIP may be approved administratively.
- **Changes in Funding/Cost Shares:** A change to the percentage of the total project cost paid by each funding partner up to twenty-five (25) percent may be approved administratively.
- **Carryover Funds:** At the end of each fiscal year, unobligated funds are moved to the new fiscal year as carryover funds. For example, if a project receives funding in a specific fiscal year, but the project is not implemented by the end of the next fiscal year, staff will automatically move the funds for that project into the next fiscal year. These changes do not require an Amendment.

Amendment or Administrative Modification Submittal

When staff receives a request for a TIP amendment or modification either from a local jurisdiction, transit provider or SCDOT, ACOG staff will determine based upon the aforementioned Modification Policy whether the request is an Amendment or an Administrative Modification.

If an Amendment is necessary, ACOG will advertise the TIP amendment on its website and in the local newspaper(s) for public comment at the designated ACOG RTAC meeting. If approved, staff will forward the amendment to SCDOT for inclusion into the STIP.

If an Administrative Modification is necessary, the implementing jurisdiction or agency and the ACOG staff must concur that the change is warranted and beneficial. ACOG's Executive Director will approve the modification and forward all necessary documentation to SCDOT, who will in turn forward to our federal partners.

Conclusion

The proactive cooperation of the ACOG local member governments and the ACOG staff will continue to contribute to better transportation infrastructure and mobility in the ACOG region. With the completion of the projects contained in the TIP, the region can look forward to improved connectivity between modes, improved mobility, as well as improved infrastructure.

ACOG Transportation Improvement Program Financial Statement

The following tables comprise the Financial Statement of the ACOG 6-year TIP. Each project in this statement is consistent with the 2040 ACOG Long-Range Transportation Plan, and has been vetted by ACOG Staff and SCDOT for financial viability. Following the Financial Statement, each program and the projects therein are described in detail.

APPALACHIAN COG TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM - FY 2017-2022 FINANCIAL STATEMENT

GUIDESHARE PROJECTS

(COST IN THOUSANDS)													2017 - 2022 TIP		2017-2022 PROJECT COST	REMAINING
GUIDESHARE PROJECTS			PCN	STIP Category	Federal Program	Previous Obligations	FY 2016	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022			
PRIORITY	COUNTY	Project														
CLOSED PROJECTS						\$ 9,440 P \$ 19,970 R \$ 127,841 C								\$ -		
APP-04	CHEROKEE	S-61 (OLD POST RD) INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS SC 105 TO SC 11		System Upgrade	STP		\$ 1,000 P	\$ 600 R	\$ 2,000 C					\$ 2,600		
	GREENVILLE	US 25 / SC 11 INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENTS ADD LOOP TO INTERCHANGE AND TURN LANES ON SC 11	37129PE01 37129RW01 37129RD01	System Upgrade	STP	\$ 963 P \$ 1,015 R \$ 3,852 C								\$ -		
	PICKENS	SC 133 RAILROAD BRIDGE IN CLEMSON REPLACE RR BRIDGE AND IMPROVE INTERSECTION	26057, 26058 26056RW01 26056BR01, UT01	System Upgrade	STP	\$ 1,400 P \$ 752 R \$ 9,772 C	\$ 3,000 C	\$ 4,300 C						\$ 4,300		
INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS																
1	OCONEE	US 123 (CLEMSON BLVD) @ S-439 (DAVIS CREEK RD)		System Upgrade	STP			\$ 300 P	\$ 250 R	\$ 1,000 C				\$ 1,550		
2	ANDERSON	US 29 @ S-146 (BOWLAN RD)/S-133 (OLD WILLIAMSTON RD)		System Upgrade	STP			\$ 300 P	\$ 350 R	\$ 1,500 C				\$ 2,150		
3	SPARTANBURG	US 176 (MAIN ST) @ SC 357 (DEPOT ST/HOLLY SPRINGS RD)		System Upgrade	STP			\$ 150 P		\$ 400 C				\$ 550		
4	SPARTANBURG	SC 14 @ I-26 EB/WB RAMP		System Upgrade	STP			\$ 400 P		\$ 200 R	\$ 500 C			\$ 1,100		
5	ANDERSON	US 76 (CLEMSON HWY) @ S-60 (WELPINE RD)		System Upgrade	STP			\$ 400 P		\$ 450 R	\$ 1,800 C			\$ 2,650		
6	OCONEE	SC 24 (WEST OAK HWY) @ SC 182 (OAKWAY RD)/S-116 (OAK CREEK RD)		System Upgrade	STP				\$ 500 P		\$ 350 R	\$ 1,800 C		\$ 2,650		
7	PICKENS	US 178 (MOOREFIELD MEM HWY) @ SC 135 (ANDERSON HWY)		System Upgrade	STP				\$ 1,000 P			\$ 2,000 R	\$ 2,500 C	\$ 5,500		
8	OCONEE	SC 59 @ SC 182/SC 243		System Upgrade	STP				\$ 1,000 P		\$ 1,000 R	\$ 2,500 C		\$ 4,500		
9	OCONEE	S-37 (JP STEVENS RD) @ S-37 (W CHERRY RD) S-65 (JP STEVENS RD) @ S-65 (MARTIN CREEK RD)		System Upgrade	STP				\$ 500 P			\$ 250 R		\$ 750	\$1,000	
10	CHEROKEE	SC 150 (S LESTONE ST) @ S-111 (W O'NEAL ST) SC 150 (PACOLET HWY) @ S-111 (E O'NEAL ST)		System Upgrade	STP					\$ 500 P		\$ 250 R		\$ 750	\$750	
11	ANDERSON	SC 28 (ABBEVILLE HWY) @ SC 185 (DUE WEST HWY)		System Upgrade	STP					\$ 400 P				\$ 400	\$1,200	
12	ANDERSON	S-97 (DALRYMPLE RD) @ L-568 (SCOTTS BRIDGE RD)		System Upgrade	STP						\$ 500 P			\$ 500	\$1,500	
RESURFACING																
1	ANDERSON	US 178 PICKENS COUNTY LINE TO S-29 (HARRIS BRIDGE RD) SAFETY SECTION/MAINTENANCE RESURFACING		System Upgrade	STP			\$ 100 P						\$ 6,100		
2	PICKENS	US 178 GPATS BOUNDARY TO ANDERSON COUNTY LINE SAFETY SECTION/MAINTENANCE RESURFACING		System Upgrade	STP				\$ 6,000 C	\$ 100 P				\$ 3,100		
										\$ 3,000 C						
GUIDESHARE ALLOCATION*							\$ 7,579	\$ 7,579	\$ 7,579	\$ 7,579	\$ 7,579	\$ 7,579	\$ 7,579	\$ 7,579	\$ 45,474	
CARRYOVER							\$ 11,336	\$ 12,068	\$ 10,298	\$ 5,025	\$ 5,199	\$ 5,818	\$ 4,532	\$ 12,068		
PROPOSED ADVANCEMENT (SCDOT)							\$ -	\$ -	\$ -							
DEBT SERVICE**							\$ (2,847)	\$ (2,799)	\$ (2,752)	\$ (2,705)	\$ (1,760)	\$ (1,765)	\$ -	\$ (11,781)		
PAYBACK (SCDOT)							\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -		
GUIDESHARE AVAILABLE FOR PROJECTS							\$ 16,068	\$ 16,848	\$ 15,125	\$ 9,899	\$ 11,018	\$ 11,632	\$ 12,111			
GUIDESHARE ALLOCATED TO PROJECTS							\$ (4,000)	\$ (6,550)	\$ (10,100)	\$ (4,700)	\$ (5,200)	\$ (7,100)	\$ (5,500)	\$ (39,150)		
BALANCE							\$ 12,068	\$ 10,298	\$ 5,025	\$ 5,199	\$ 5,818	\$ 4,532	\$ 6,611	\$ 6,611	\$ 4,450	

KEY: P: ENGINEERING DESIGN AND ENVIRONMENTAL ANALYSIS, R: RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION, C: CONSTRUCTION
 AD: ADMINISTRATION, CA: CAPITAL, FC: TRANSIT FACILITY CONSTRUCTION, VA: TRANSIT VEHICLE ACQUISITION
 PS: TRANSIT PURCHASE OF SERVICE, OP: OPERATIONS, O: OTHER, PL: PLANNING/FEASIBILITY

SCDOT CHANGES ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN YELLOW
 ACOG DRAFT CHANGES ARE HIGHLIGHTED IN BLUE

Guideshare Program

The Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) adopted by the SCDOT Commission in currently allocates \$7,579,000 annually to ACOG. The annual debt service for the 1997 Project Acceleration Program will vary slightly from year to year, but is approximately \$2.7 million.

ACOG Guideshare projects are broken into four categories:

- The **Project Acceleration Program** was funded by a major bond issue in 1997. All projects are now complete; however, debt service on the bond issue will continue through FY 2021.
- **ACOG Existing Guideshare Projects**
- **ACOG New Guideshare Intersection Projects**
- **ACOG New Guideshare Resurfacing Projects** – The SCDOT Commission in 2012 established the requirement for all MPOs and COGs to use 20% of their Guideshare funding for Resurfacing on the National Highway System Primary Routes, or to bolster intersection projects throughout the region.

PROJECT ACCELERATION

Debt Service

Total Cost (in thousands): \$60,000

Description: Annual payments to service bonds issued by SCDOT as part of a Project Acceleration Program begun in 1998; debt service payments will continue through 2022.

Purpose: To retire bonds issued to finance a portion of the costs of \$60,000,000 highway projects built between 1998 and 2007.

County, City Entire ACOG Transportation Study Area

Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE									
ROW									
CONSTR									
TOTAL	\$48,219	\$2,799	\$2,752	\$2,705	\$1,760	\$1,765	\$0	\$11,781	\$0

ACOG EXISTING GUIDESHARE PROJECTS

S-61 (Old Post Road) Intersection Improvements (from SC 105 to SC 11)

Total Cost: \$3,600,000

Description: Improve intersections along Old Post Road corridor

Purpose: **CHANGE:** This project was originally programmed as a widening project, but further analysis revealed a full widening unwarranted. The revised scope focuses on safety at major intersections along the Old Post Road corridor from SC 105 to SC 11.

County, City: Cherokee County

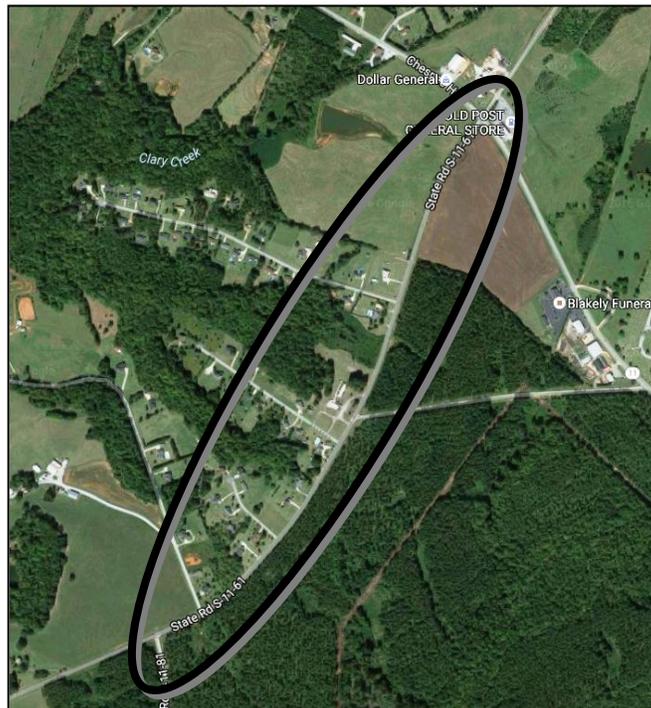
Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE	\$1,000								
ROW		\$600						\$600	
CONSTR			\$2,000					\$2,000	
TOTAL		\$600	\$2,000					\$2,600	



SC 133 (College Avenue) Railroad Bridge

Total Cost: \$19,224,000

Description: Replace Railroad Bridge and Improve Intersection with US 76/US 123 (Tiger Boulevard).

Purpose: **CHANGE:** The Bridge reconstruction project was originally delayed in 2012. SCDOT and Norfolk Southern have agreed on a path to completion for the project, which will require additional guideshare allocations in the TIP period 2017-2022.

County, City Oconee County, City of Clemson

Program: ARRA, Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE	\$1,400								
ROW	\$752								
CONSTR	\$12,772	4,300							
TOTAL		\$4,300						\$4,300	



ACOG NEW GUIDESHARE INTERSECTION PROJECTS

US 123 (Clemson Boulevard) @ S-439 (Davis Creek Road)

Total Cost: \$1,550,000

Description: Lower grade of Davis Creek Rd., modify ingress/egress for industrial complex

Purpose: Improve approach to the intersection from the south. Roadway grades on Davis Creek Road limit sight distance. Re-grading the roadway and modifying ingress and egress and nearby industrial facility will increase safety and performance of the intersection and nearby residential areas.

County, City Oconee County

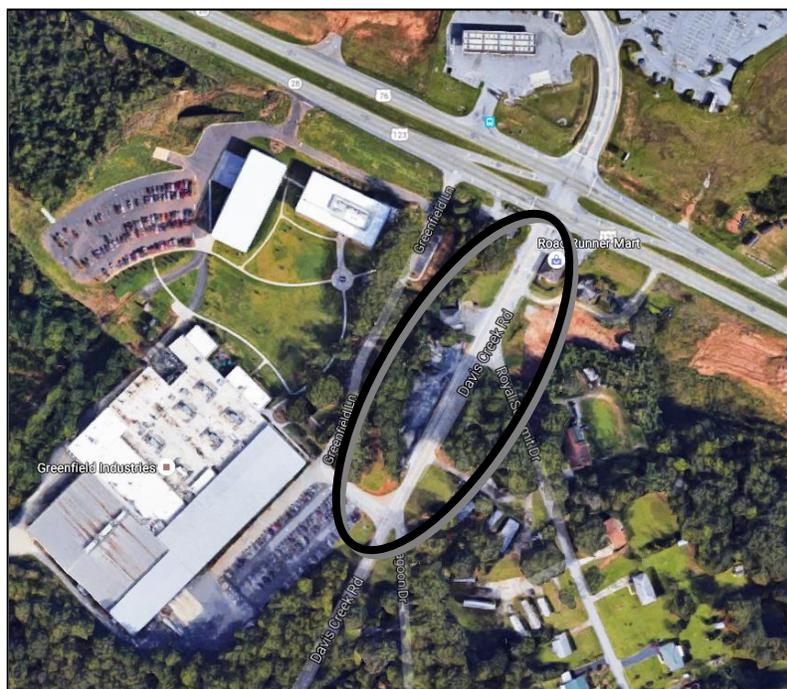
Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE		\$300						\$300	
ROW			\$250					\$250	
CONSTR				\$1,000				\$1,000	
TOTAL		\$300	\$250	\$1,000				\$1,550	



US 29 @ S-146 (Bowlan Road) / S-331 (Old Williamston Road)

Total Cost: \$2,150,000

Description: Close Segment, realign routes, consolidate d-ways.

Purpose: Improve safety around Jockey Lot. During peak times, the intersection is confusing and does not delineate a main entrance for the Jockey Lot. Clean up the intersection and delineate a proper and accessible entrance for Jockey Lot patrons.

County, City Anderson County

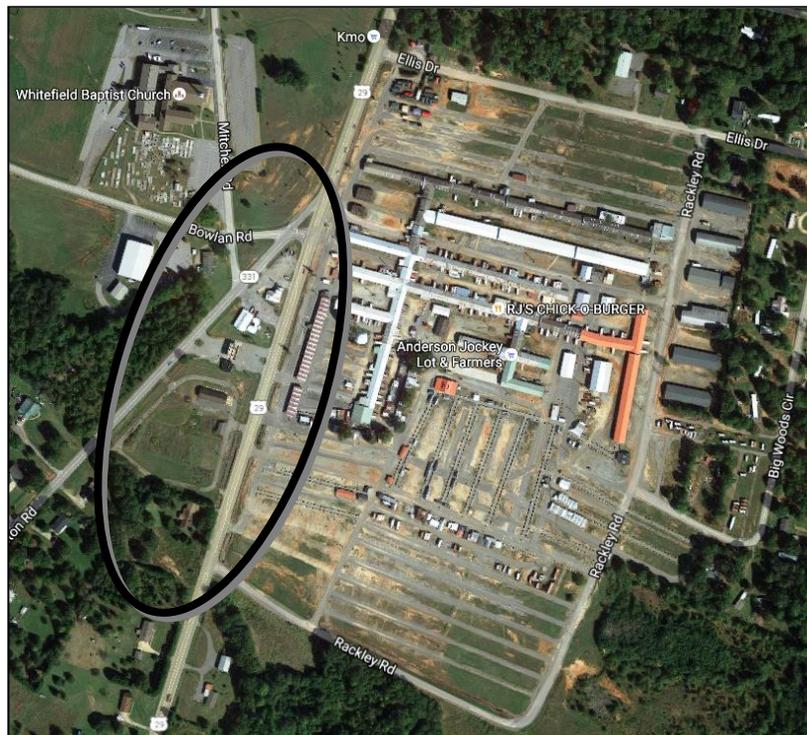
Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE		\$300						\$300	
ROW			\$350					\$350	
CONSTR				\$1,500				\$1,500	
TOTAL		\$300	\$350	\$1,500				\$2,150	



US 176 (Main Street) @ SC 357 (Depot Street/Holly Springs Road)

Total Cost: \$550,000

Description: improve sight lines with traffic control changes.

Purpose: Improve safety and functionality of intersection. Both SC 357 approaches to US 76 are misaligned. It is cost prohibitive to realign these intersections. Signalize intersection and review grade of approaches.

County, City Spartanburg County, City of Campobello

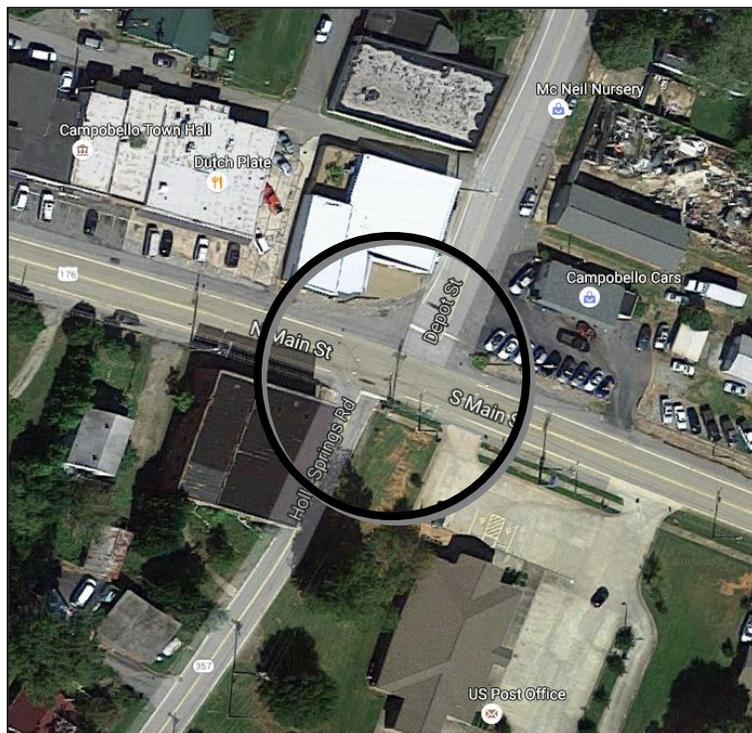
Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE		\$150						\$150	
ROW									
CONSTR				\$400				\$400	
TOTAL		\$150		\$400				\$550	



SC 14 @ Interstate 26 EB and WB Ramps

Total Cost: \$1,100,000

Description: Geometry changes for better sight lines and/or traffic control.

Purpose: Improve safety at off-ramp intersection with SC 14. Current configuration limits sight distance at both directional ramps. Signalize ramps and analyze geometry for possible corrections.

County, City Spartanburg County, City of Landrum

Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE		\$400						\$400	
ROW				\$200				\$200	
CONSTR					\$500			\$500	
TOTAL		\$400		\$200	\$500			\$1,100	



US 76 (Clemson Highway) @ S-60 (Welpine Road)

Total Cost: \$2,650,000

Description: Correct geometry at intersection.

Purpose: Improve safety and sight distance at the approach to the intersection. Current configuration has a sharp turn to the south as Welpine Road approaches US 76. Smooth this curve to a more gradual shift.

County, City: Anderson County

Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE		\$400						\$400	
ROW					\$450			\$450	
CONSTR						\$1,800		\$1,800	
TOTAL		\$400			\$450	\$1,800		\$2,650	



SC 24 (West Oak Highway) @ SC 182 (Oakway Road) / S-116 (Oak Creek Road)

Total Cost: \$2,650,000

Description: Improves intersection with new geometry and turn lanes.

Purpose: Improve safety and functionality of the intersection. Current configuration has several conflict points and substandard sight distances. Consolidate approaches to SC 24 from the south; reconfigure the approaches to SC 182/S-116 to optimize safety.

County, City Oconee County

Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE			\$500					\$500	
ROW					\$350			\$350	
CONSTR						\$1,800		\$1,800	
TOTAL			\$500		\$350	\$1,800		\$2,650	



US 178 (Moorefield Memorial Highway) @ SC 135 (Anderson Highway)

Total Cost: \$5,500,000

Description: Realign intersection from Y to a T; correct geometric and site distance issues.

Purpose: Improve intersection geometry and reduce conflict points for safety. Configuring this intersection to a T-type design will reduce unnecessary conflict points, improve sight distance at US 178, and reduce driver confusion when approaching the intersection.

County, City Pickens County

Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE			\$1,000					\$1,000	
ROW						\$2,000		\$2,000	
CONSTR							\$2,500	\$2,500	
TOTAL			\$1,000			\$2,000	\$2,500	\$5,500	



SC 59 @ SC 182 / SC 243

Total Cost: \$4,500,000

Description: Intersection improvement (Yoders)

Purpose: Improve intersection geometry and safety. The intersection is confusing and unsafe, and operates as a 3-way intersection rather than a 4-way intersection. Reconfigure the geometry of the intersection and add signalization.

County, City Oconee County, City of Fair Play

Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE				\$1,000				\$1,000	
ROW						\$1,000		\$1,000	
CONSTR							\$2,500	\$2,500	
TOTAL				\$1,000		\$1,000	\$2,500	\$4,500	



S-37 (J.P Stevens Road) @ S-37 (West Cherry Road) / S-65 (Martin Creek Road)

Total Cost: \$1,750,000

Description: Lower road grades; safety improvements.

Purpose: Improve sight distance at intersection approaches and reconfigure geometry. Sight distance is an issue approaching J.P. Stevens Road from the east on West Cherry Road. In addition, the geometry at the intersection is confusing to approaching motorists. Sight distance is also an issue at the Martin Creek Road approach. Modifications will address these issues and improve safety.

County, City Oconee County

Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE				\$500				\$500	
ROW							\$250	\$250	
CONSTR									\$1,000
TOTAL				\$500			\$250	\$750	\$1,000



SC 150 (South Limestone Street/Pacolet Highway) @ S-111 (O'Neal Street)

Total Cost: \$1,500,000

Description: Projects to be completed simultaneously; peanut roundabout a possibility.

Purpose: Improve safety and traffic flow. The main line (SC 150) is interrupted by O'Neal Street, which requires motorists to temporarily turn on to O'Neal in order to continue on SC 150. Limestone College is nearby to the south. Add signalization, or some other possible configuration (i.e. roundabout) to assist mainline traffic moving through the area.

County, City Cherokee County, City of Gaffney

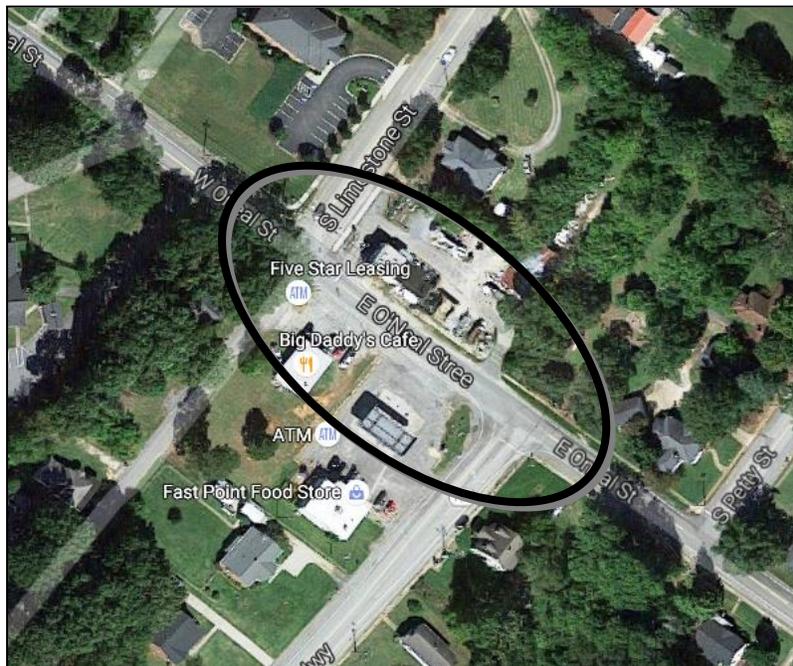
Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE					\$500			\$500	
ROW							\$250	\$250	
CONSTR									\$750
TOTAL					\$500		\$250	\$750	\$750



SC 28 (Abbeville Highway) @ SC 185 (Due West Highway)

Total Cost: \$1,600,000

Description: Realign intersection from Y to a T.

Purpose: Improve intersection geometry and reduce conflict points for safety. Configuring this intersection to a T-type design will reduce unnecessary conflict points and improve sight distance at SC 28.

County, City Anderson County

Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE					\$400			\$400	
ROW									\$200
CONSTR									\$1,000
TOTAL					\$400			\$400	\$1,200



S-97 (Dalrymple Road) @ L-568 (Scotts Bridge Road)

Total Cost: \$2,000,000

Description: Realign intersection from Y to a T.

Purpose: Improve intersection geometry and reduce conflict points for safety. Configuring this intersection to a T-type design will reduce unnecessary conflict points and improve sight distance at Dalrymple Road.

County, City: Anderson County

Program: Guidesshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE						\$500		\$500	
ROW									\$300
CONSTR									\$1,200
TOTAL						\$500		\$500	\$1,500



ACOG NEW GUIDESHARE RESURFACING PROJECTS

US 178 from Pickens County Line to S-29 (Harris Bridge Road)

Total Cost (in thousands): \$6,100,000

Description: Safety Section/Maintenance Resurfacing

Purpose: Improve pavement quality along heavily traveled section of US 178 by resurfacing and adding shoulders where possible.

County, City Anderson County

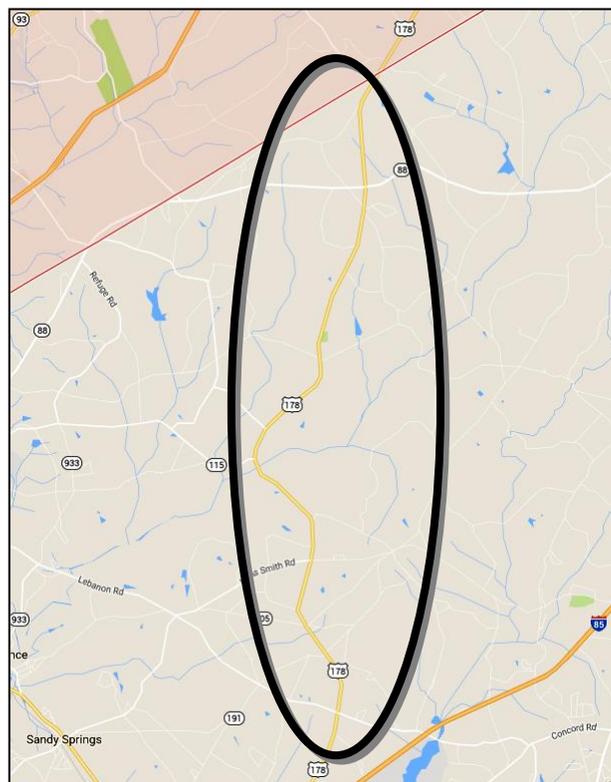
Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE		\$100						\$100	
ROW									
CONSTR			\$6,000					\$6,000	
TOTAL		\$100	\$6,000					\$6,100	



US 178 from GPATS Boundary to Anderson County Line

Total Cost (in thousands): \$3,100,000

Description: Safety Section/Maintenance Resurfacing

Purpose: Improve pavement quality along heavily traveled section of US 178 by resurfacing and adding shoulders where possible.

County, City Pickens County

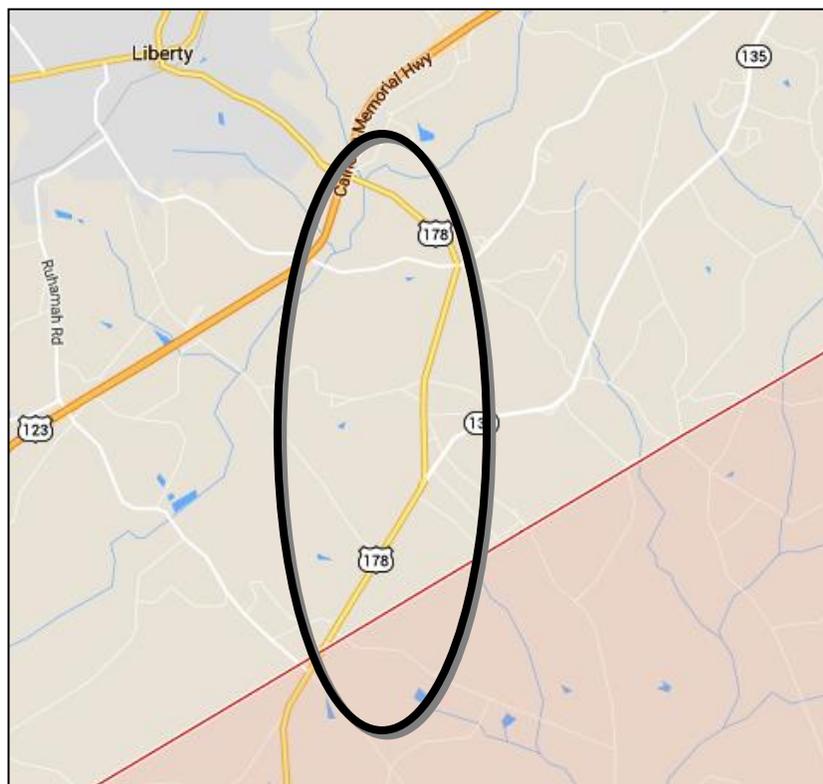
Program: Guideshare

Funding Source: Surface Transportation Program

Remarks:

Costs in thousands

ACTIVITY	PREVIOUS	FY 2017	FY 2018	FY 2019	FY 2020	FY 2021	FY 2022	TIP TOTAL	REMAINING
PE				\$100				\$100	
ROW									
CONSTR					\$3,000			\$3,000	
TOTAL				\$100	\$3,000			\$3,100	

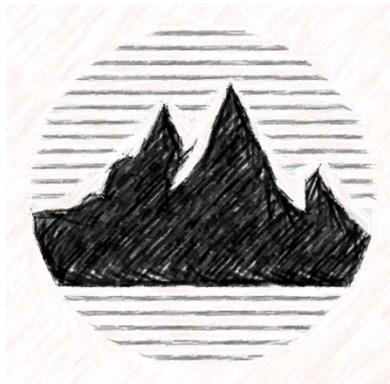


APPENDIX A: ACOG PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN

Public Participation Plan

For the Rural Transportation Planning Program

The Appalachian Council of Governments



March 2016

The public participation plan for the Appalachian Council of Governments describes tools and strategies to ensure accurate and timely public information and participation in transportation planning. The plan describes the transportation planning process, public involvement methods, and evaluation measures for public involvement activities.

Table of Contents

I.	INTRODUCTION	1
II.	BACKGROUND	1
III.	GOVERNMENTAL REQUIREMENTS	1
IV.	PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS	2
A.	General Guidelines.....	2
B.	Public Participation Plan Vision, Goals & Policies	3
V.	CURRENT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES	5
A.	Charrettes	5
B.	Consultation	6
C.	Display Ads	6
D.	Direct and Electronic Mailings	6
E.	Legal Advertisements.....	6
F.	ACOG Databases	7
G.	Transportation Planning Website	7
H.	Public Information Meetings	7
I.	Public Notices.....	7
J.	Small Group Meetings.....	8
K.	Surveys	8
L.	Visualization	8
VI.	EVALUATION METHODS, PERFORMANCE GOALS, AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES	8
A.	Surveys	8
B.	Statistical Analysis	9

I. INTRODUCTION

The Appalachian Council of Governments (ACOG) policy is to support and encourage public participation and to adhere to the principles of the rural transportation planning process. The ACOG's public participation policy is designed to ensure opportunities for the public to express its views on transportation issues and to become active participants in the decision-making process.

II. BACKGROUND

Although the ultimate responsibility of rural transportation planning in South Carolina lies with the SCDOT, each COG has responsibilities similar to that of the Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), who are responsible for urban transportation planning. A portion of the SCDOT's State, Planning, and Research (SPR) funding is allocated to the COGs to facilitate an ongoing rural transportation planning process. Each COG, in partnership with the SCDOT, is responsible for implementing a transportation planning process that fully complies with the federal planning requirements established by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act. Each COG is required to submit a Rural Planning Work Program (RPWP) outlining the planning emphasis areas and planning projects for the year. Through this process, each COG establishes regional goals and objectives, identifies the current condition of the transportation system, provides research and data analysis, and identifies and prioritizes transportation needs for input to the Statewide Multi-modal Transportation Plan and State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

The ACOG also maintains a Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) that includes the following elements: system upgrade, intersections, safety, maintenance/resurfacing, signalization, mass transit, and bike and pedestrian facilities. Potential projects are ranked and recommended by the advisory committees to the COG boards based on funding availability. The long range plans include both constrained and unconstrained needs. The long range plan is updated every 5 years from the date of adoption, or as needed.

The ACOG receives local input on transportation projects from its regional Rural Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (RTAC), which is a newly established technical committee that consists of ACOG staff and representatives of the SCDOT. This committee plays an important role in identifying, analyzing and prioritizing transportation needs and goals for the ACOG region and makes recommendations to the ACOG Regional Transportation Committee, then to the Board of Directors, which is the policymaking body. Consequently, local governments are directly consulted and given an opportunity to identify transportation needs on the state system. The RTAC meets as needed to review project status, evaluate proposed modifications to the STIP, update long-range plan and funding priorities, comment on rural functional classification changes, receive input on the rural work programs, and coordinate special studies.

III. GOVERNMENTAL REQUIREMENTS

The previous transportation authorization, MAP-21, describes Federal Planning Factors issued by Congress to emphasize a national perspective. Under the FAST Act these existing planning factors

remain unchanged. However, the FAST Act does add two additional factors to consider. The eight existing planning factors and two newly added factors (in BOLD and italics) are as follows:

1. Support the economic vitality of the United States, the States, nonmetropolitan areas, and metropolitan areas, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and nonmotorized users;
4. Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and freight;
5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes throughout the State, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation;
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system;
9. Improve the resiliency and reliability of the transportation system and reduce or mitigate stormwater impacts of surface transportation; and
10. Enhance travel and tourism.

IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PROCESS

A. General Guidelines

The ACOG Rural Transportation Public Participation Plan is intended to provide direction for public participation activities and contains the vision, goals, objectives, and techniques used by ACOG for public participation. In its public participation process, the ACOG will strive to:

1. Provide timely information about transportation issues and processes to citizens, local governments, affected public agencies, representatives of transportation agencies, freight shippers, providers of freight transportation services, private providers of transportation, representatives of users of public transportation, representatives of users of pedestrian walkways and bicycle transportation facilities, representatives of the disabled, and other interested parties and segments of the community affected by transportation plans, programs and projects.
2. Provide reasonable public access to technical and policy information used in the development of the LRTP, STIP, RPWP, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects, and conduct open public meetings where matters related to transportation programs are being considered.
3. Give adequate public notice of public participation activities and allow time for public review and comment at key decision points, including but not limited to, the approval of the LRTP, STIP, RPWP, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects.
4. Respond to all applicable public input. When significant written and oral comments are received on the draft transportation plan (including the financial plan) as a result of the public participation process, a summary, analysis, and report on the disposition of comments shall be made part of the final plan.
5. Provide a public comment period of not less than 15 calendar days prior to adoption of the LRTP, STIP, RPWP, any amendments or updates, and other appropriate transportation plans and projects.
6. Coordinate its Public Participation Process with statewide Public Participation Processes wherever possible to enhance public consideration of the issues, plans and programs, and reduce redundancies and costs.
7. Periodically review the Public Participation Process to ensure it provides full and open access to all. Portions of the process which are found not to meet the needs of the constituency will be revised.

B. Public Participation Plan Vision, Goals & Policies

The vision for the public participation plan is that the public will be provided thorough information on transportation planning services and project development in a convenient and timely manner. The following goals and policies have been established.

Goal 1: To actively engage the public in the transportation planning process according to the policies contained in Federal and State law as well as in this Public Participation Plan.

- A. The ACOG shall maintain an up-to-date database of contacts including at a minimum the following persons:
 - Federal, state, local agencies responsible for planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movements, land use management, natural resources, and historic preservation

- Elected Officials
- Local Government Staff
- Transportation Agencies (freight, port, airports, transit, etc.)
- Representatives of Users of Public Transportation
- Representatives of Users of Pedestrian and Bicycle Transportation
- Representatives of the Disabled
- Local Media
- Homeowners' Associations
- Civic Groups
- Special Interest Groups
- Individuals expressing an interest in transportation planning activities

- B. The ACOG shall, when feasible, electronically send and/or mail meeting announcements (invitations) to SCACOG contact list or to targeted groups upcoming activities.
- C. The ACOG shall employ visualization techniques to depict transportation plans. Examples of visualization techniques include: charts, graphs, photo interpretation, maps, use of GIS, artist's renderings, physical models, and/or computer simulation.

Goal 2: The ACOG shall keep the public informed of on-going transportation related activities on a continuous basis.

- A. SCACOG shall make all publications and work products available to the public via Internet, staff office, and employ visualization techniques to describe transportation actions as part of the LRTP.
- B. Staff shall be available to provide general and project-specific information at a central location during normal business hours and after hours at the request of groups with reasonable notice.
- C. The ACOG shall maintain a Transportation section on its website and maintain transportation related maps on its mapping website.
1. The website shall be updated and maintained to provide the most current information available.
 2. The website shall, at a minimum, contain the following information:
 - Current ACOG Transportation Planning Staff contact information (i.e. name, title, mailing address, phone, fax, and e-mail)
 - Meeting calendars and agendas
 - Brief descriptions of current projects
 - Work products and publications (TIP, LRTP, RPWP, PPP)
 - Comment/Question form
 - Links to related agencies (e.g. the SCDOT)
 - Transportation maps

Goal 3: The ACOG shall encourage the participation of all citizens in the transportation planning process.

- A. Target audiences shall be identified for each planning study conducted by the ACOG, including residents, business and property owners and those traditionally underserved and underrepresented populations, including but limited to, low income and minority households, within the study area.
- B. The ACOG shall, whenever feasible, hold public meetings at a scheduled time, location, and building facility convenient to potentially affected citizens.
- C. The ACOG will provide an additional opportunity for public comments, if the final LRTP or STIP differs significantly from the version that was initially made available for public comment.

Goal 4: The ACOG shall strive to continuously improve public participation.

- A. The ACOG shall continuously evaluate public participation techniques, according to the procedures contained in this Public Participation Plan.
- B. The Public Participation Plan shall be reviewed and adopted, with revisions if necessary, at least every three (3) years.

Goal 5: The ACOG shall participate in public participation activities for individual transportation improvement projects from the planning phase through construction.

- A. The ACOG shall actively assist SCDOT, local governments and transportation agencies in the development and implementation of public participation techniques for planning and other studies.
- B. The ACOG shall keep local elected officials apprised of projects in their jurisdictions and will help coordinate communication between SCDOT and local governments through all project stages, including but not limited to planning, funding, design, materials, ROW acquisition, and construction.

V. CURRENT PUBLIC PARTICIPATION TECHNIQUES

Public participation is an ongoing activity of the SCACOG RTAC. An effective public participation plan is characterized by techniques and procedures that enable citizens to become well informed. This section contains descriptions of public participation tools of which SCACOG currently uses and proposes to use in the future. These tools are as follows:

A. Charrettes

Description: Charrettes are typically intense, possibly multi-day meetings involving municipal officials, planning officials and local residents. A charrette is instrumental in identifying key

issues early, promotes joint ownership of the solution and attempts to diffuse traditional confrontation between stakeholders.

Activities: Project specific meetings, corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies and workshops.

B. Consultation

Description: The ACOG will consult, as appropriate, with agencies and officials responsible for other planning activities that are affected by transportation within the ACOG region. To coordinate the planning function to the maximum extent practicable, such consultation will entail comparing LRTPs and TIPs as they are developed with the plans, maps, inventories, and planning documents developed by other agencies. This consultation will include, as appropriate, contact with the following groups: State, local, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO), and private agencies responsible for planned growth, economic development, environmental protection, airport operations, freight movements, land use management, natural resources, and historic preservation. The ACOG maintains an open consultation policy, whereby any private citizen or entity responsible for transportation in the ACOG region may contact ACOG and be included in the consultation process.

Activities: Public hearings/meetings, copies of this plan on the CRCOG website (for viewing/downloading purposes), meetings with ACOG Staff.

C. Display Ads

Description: These ads are used to promote meetings that are not regularly scheduled, such as corridor study workshops. They are published on the ACOG website in order to reach a larger audience than those that typically read legal ads.

Activities: Project specific meetings, workshops, open houses or hearings.

D. Direct and Electronic Mailings

Description: Direct Mailings are used to announce upcoming meetings or activities or to provide information to a targeted area, group of people, or the media. Direct mailings are usually letters, but can be post cards, fliers, or email notification. An area may be targeted for a direct mailing because of potential impacts from a project. Groups are targeted that may have an interest in a specific issue, for example cyclists/cycling clubs and pedestrians may be targeted for pathways and trail projects.

Activities: Project specific meetings, workshops, open houses, corridor studies, small-area studies, other planning studies or major activities.

E. Legal Advertisements

Description: The SCDOT requires a minimum thirty (15) day advertisement of any public meeting where a decision could be made that would make a significant change to an existing plan or program. Ads are published to solicit public comment and/or review of the requested

change or plan update. The ads provide a description of the meeting agenda, including contact information.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies funded with federal or state transportation funds, major TIP amendments, updates of the LRTP and RPWP, and other major ACOG TAC activities.

F. ACOG Databases

Description: Staff maintains databases of all contacts, both business and public, on a continuous basis. The database includes committee membership, mailing information, phone numbers, fax numbers, and e-mail addresses. The database is used for maintaining up-to-date committee membership lists and lists of individual with a special interest in ACOG activities including the media and public interest groups. Membership mailing lists generated using the database may be provided to the public, municipalities and other agencies upon request or as appropriate. The databases are used to establish and maintain a list of e-mail contacts for electronic meeting notification and announcements.

Activities: The databases are used to enhance other public participation activities.

G. Transportation Planning Website

Description: The transportation planning website is found within ACOG’s website, under the drop-down menu “Services,” then “Planning Services,” then “Transportation Services.” The site provides basic information about the ACOG, transportation planning process, and staff contact information. ACOG publications and work products, such as the RPWP, TIP, and LRTP are available for downloading from the site. The site is maintained and updated by ACOG staff. The website address is www.scacog.org.

Activities: The site is used to promote regular and special meetings, planning studies, publications and work products.

H. Public Information Meetings

Description: These are public meetings that are generally open and informal, with project team members interacting with the public on a one-on-one basis. Short presentations may be given at these meetings. The purpose of public informational meetings is to provide project information to the public and to solicit public comment.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies, project priority process, certification review, LRTP update, and other major ACOG activities.

I. Public Notices

Description: The SCACOG regularly advertises COG Board of Directors meetings.

Activities: Regular meetings, other public meetings.

J. Small Group Meetings

Description: During projects such as planning studies, meetings are held with small groups that have an interest in the project. Meetings could be with homeowners or neighborhood associations, civic groups, special interest groups, or other groups of affected or interested parties.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies, other planning studies, and other ACOG activities.

K. Surveys

Description: Surveys are used when very specific input from the public is desired. A survey can be used in place of comment cards to ask very specific questions such as whether a person supports a specific alignment in a corridor study. Surveys are also used to gather technical data during corridor and planning studies. For example, participants may be asked about their daily travel patterns.

Activities: Corridor studies, sub-area studies and other planning studies.

L. Visualization

Description: The ACOG recognizes that an important element to public participation is to provide the public, when possible, visual as well as written descriptions of transportation projects. Through visual imagery, the complex features of proposed transportation plans, policies, and programs can be portrayed at appropriate scales—region, local, project architecture, etc.—and from different points of view. To this end, the ACOG will utilize various visual design techniques; some of which may include: sketches, drawings, artist renderings, photography, aerial photography, mapping, simulated photos, videos, computer modeled images, interactive geographical information system (GIS), GIS-based scenario planning tools, photo manipulation and computer simulation.

Activities: Planning Studies, STIP amendments, and other ACOG activities.

VI. EVALUATION METHODS, PERFORMANCE GOALS, AND IMPROVEMENT STRATEGIES

In order to determine the effectiveness of the public participation tools, they must be evaluated and compared to established performance goals and or desired outcomes. The typical methods for evaluating the effectiveness of public participation tools are surveys and quantitative statistical analysis.

A. Surveys

Surveys typically consist of short, specific questions regarding public participation tools that are ongoing or that were used on a specific project. Surveys can be conducted in person, by phone, mail or e-mail. Face-to-face and telephone surveys provide quick responses and can be used when a respondent's answer may lead to a follow-up question. Mail and e-mail surveys

(SurveyMonkey and other) may be used to provide written record of respondent's answers. Mailback surveys can be distributed at meetings, inside other publications, or by mailing directly to potential respondents. Surveys will be used to evaluate citizens' responses on the effectiveness of the tools.

B. Statistical Analysis

Statistics can be used to determine the "return on the investment" or outcomes of public participation tools. This type of evaluation can be an indicator of whether or not the tools used for public participation are actually reaching the intended audience or which tools had a greater response rate. Statistical analysis will be used to evaluate survey responses and most tools' rates of success will be compared with evaluation measures.

The ACOG continually strives for improved public participation. Improvements should be made to increase public awareness and to improve the quantity and quality of information provided to the public. The decisions made by the ACOG affect the entire population, both residents and visitors. Therefore, seeking public input on those decisions is vital to the success of the ACOG as the organization responsible for rural transportation planning in the Upstate Region of South Carolina.