

Introduction

About this Plan

This document is the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for the urbanized areas of York and Lancaster Counties, South Carolina. It has been prepared by the Rock Hill - Fort Mill Area Transportation Study (RFATS), which is the local organization responsible for regional transportation planning in this area. Federal law requires the preparation of this plan, and also specifies issues which the plan must consider.



The plan is multi-modal, covering highways, public transportation, freight, bicycle and pedestrian travel, as well as aviation. It includes a financial plan for transportation expenditures to 2035, as well as a congestion management process. The plan also takes social and environmental considerations into account, along with public involvement during the course of its preparation.

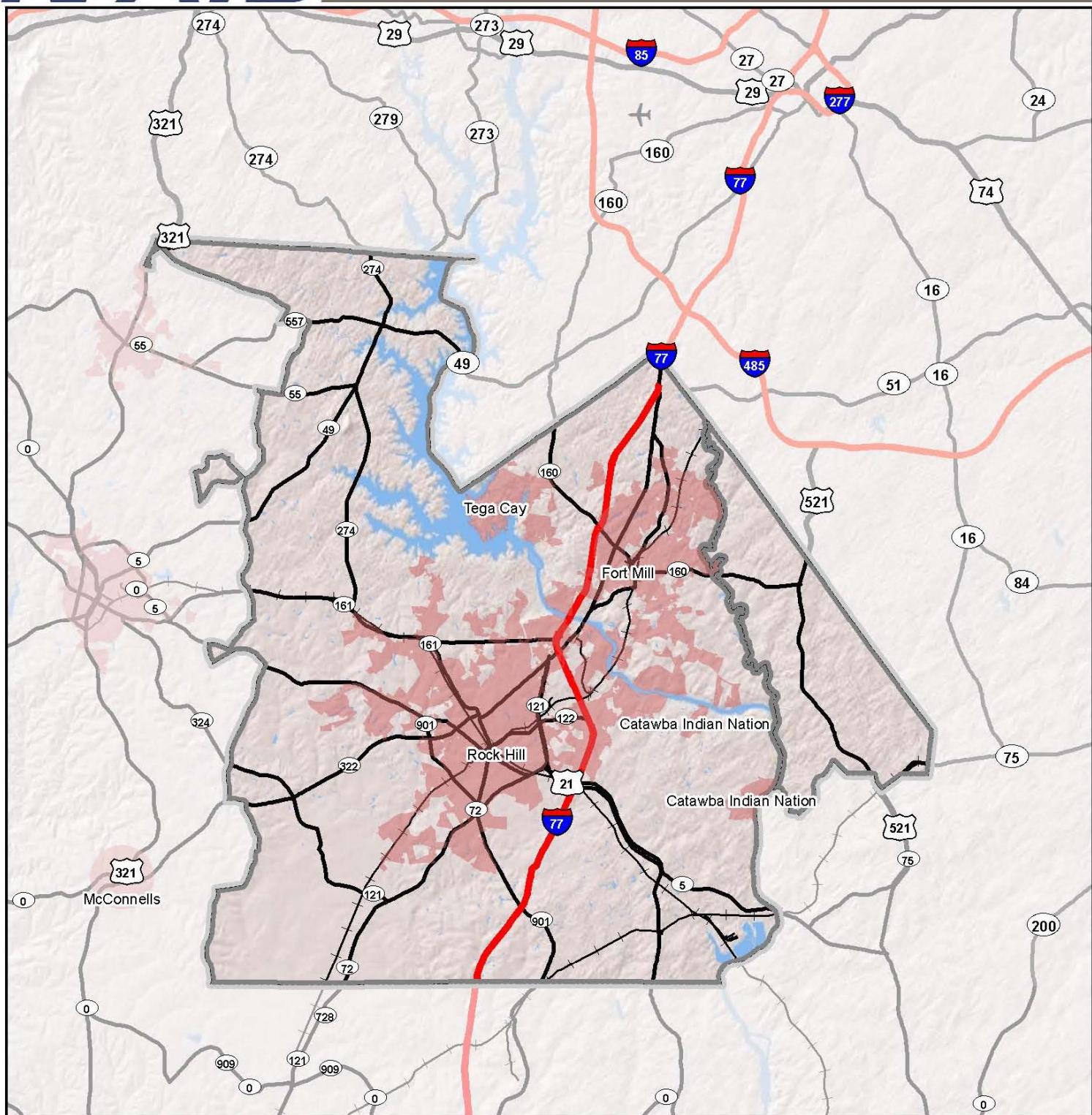
About the RFATS Metropolitan Planning Organization

RFATS is a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). MPOs are local agencies that are responsible for regional transportation planning. In order to be part of the Federal transportation planning process and to receive Federal transportation funds, an urban area must have an MPO. Each MPO has a range of duties including the production of the LRTP for its area. The overall aim of these Federal requirements is to ensure continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning for urban areas, and MPOs are central to that process.



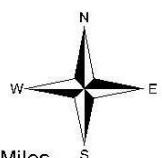
Figure 1.1 shows the RFATS Study Area within the greater Charlotte region. The member communities of RFATS include the cities of Rock Hill and Tega Cay, the Town of Fort Mill, the unincorporated urban areas of York County, and the Catawba Indian Nation.

- An orderly evaluation process.



Legend

- Municipal Boundary
- Interstate
- State Highway
- RFATS
- US Highway
- Railroad
- airports



RFATS Study Area

About the RFATS Study Area

The RFATS Study Area is situated on the I-77 and US 521 corridors. Its largest city, Rock Hill, is 20 miles south of Charlotte, North Carolina and approximately 65 miles north of Columbia, South Carolina, the state's capital. The Census Bureau estimates that Rock Hill is now the fourth-largest City in South Carolina. Nearby, I-85 connects the area to Greenville, South Carolina and Atlanta, Georgia to the west. A major international airport is available to the community via the Charlotte/Douglas International Airport, as is one of the east coast's major ports at Charleston via interstate highway links of I-77 and I-26. Freight rail facilities broadly parallel I-77 regionally and run through downtown Rock Hill. One of the state's major river systems, the Catawba, flows through the area.

As described above, the RFATS Study Area includes the cities of Rock Hill and Tega Cay, the Town of Fort Mill, and the Catawba Indian Nation within York County. In Lancaster County it includes the urbanized area north of SC 75 along the US 521 corridor. It also includes the unincorporated communities of Bethel, Lake Wylie, India Hook, Newport, Lesslie and Catawba.

The regional transportation planning process in the RFATS Study Area began in the early 1960s, covering the eastern urban area of York County (at that time, essentially meaning Rock Hill). The RFATS Study Area has subsequently grown in size and population to encompass Tega Cay and Fort Mill, and in 2000 included over 119,000 people. This population growth has led to increasing pressure on parts of the transportation system, and the growth is expected to continue.



Required Planning Elements

The Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) was signed into law on July 6, 2012. It provides over \$105 billion in funding for surface transportation programs for fiscal years 2013 and 2014 and will guide the growth and development of America's transportation infrastructure. The goals of MAP-21 include:

- Strengthening America's highways
- Establishing a performance-based program
- Creating jobs and supporting economic growth

- Supporting the United States Department of Transportation's aggressive safety agenda
- Streamlining Federal highway transportation programs
- Accelerating project delivery and promoting innovation

The goals of the MAP-21 language manifest themselves into eight broad planning factors that have been identified for special focus within the MPO long range transportation planning program. These planning factors are addressed throughout this plan and are specifically discussed in subsequent sections. Local officials must consider how projects and transportation initiatives address the following areas:

- Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency
- Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users
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- Increase the accessibility and mobility of people and for freight
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns
- Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight
- Promote efficient system management and operation
- Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system

The Transportation Planning Process and the LRTP

Figure 1.2 summarizes the transportation planning process in general terms.

This LRTP has been prepared in accordance with MAP-21 requirements. It is an update of the previous plan (2035 LRTP) which was adopted in 2009.

Figure 1.2 The Transportation Planning Process