

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

Transportation Programming for the Counties of: Carbon ✧ Monroe ✧ Pike ✧ Schuylkill

July 23, 2019 Technical Planning Committee Meeting Summary and Minutes **9:30 a.m.**

Meeting Location:
NEPA Alliance
1151 Oak Street
Pittston, PA 18640

Technical Planning Committee

Attendees:	Organization:	Attendees:	Organization:
Marie Bishop*	PennDOT District 4-0	Michele Scribbick	Commuter Services
David Bodnar*	Carbon Co. Planning	Jason Skrimcovsky	Carbon Co. Planning
Brendan Cotter*	CCCT/LANTA	Susan Smith*	Schuylkill Co. Planning
Brian Funkhouser	Michael Baker Intl.	Matt Smoker	FHWA
Chuck Gould*	Chestnuthill Twp.	Brian Snyder*	Pike Co. Planning
Ray Green*	PennDOT Central	Scott Vottero*	PennDOT District 5-0
Larry Shifflet	PennDOT Central	Eric Ziegmont	Commuter Services
Doyle Heffley*	PA House of Reps.	Peggy Howarth*	MCTA
Christine Meinhart-Fritz*	Monroe Co. Planning		
Mike Mrozinski*	Pike Co. Planning	Alan Baranski	NEPA Alliance
Morgan Ruziecki	Michael Baker Intl.	Nettie Ginocchetti	NEPA Alliance
Braulio Sanchez	PennDOT District 5-0	Kate McMahon	NEPA Alliance
		Daniel Yelito	NEPA Alliance

*Committee members who voted at this meeting.

Summary of Actions Taken by the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee:

During the course of this meeting the MPO Committee voted on the following actions:

Action 1: Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Committee to approve the minutes from the May 22, 2019 meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Committee to confirm the June 25, 2019 email ballot on the SR 209/115 Intersection Improvement Project ROW Phase Increase. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Ms. Howarth. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion to approve the MCTA Server Replacement Amendment. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Meinhart-Fritz called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1) Business Items

- a) Approval of minutes from the May 22, 2019 Business Meeting

Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Committee to approve the minutes from the May 22, 2019 meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Howarth to approve the minutes, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Confirmation of the June 25, 2019 Email Ballot for SR 209/115 Intersection Improvement Project ROW Phase Increase

Ms. McMahon reported that the email ballot from June 25th passed by a vote of 12 yay, 1 nay. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Committee to confirm the June 25, 2019 email ballot on the SR 209/115 Intersection Improvement Project ROW Phase Increase. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Ms. Howarth. The motion passed unanimously.

2) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

a) District 4-0 and 5-0 2019-2022 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted combined administrative actions on the 2019 TIP for District 4-0 and 5-0. Mr. Green and Ms. Bishop presented the actions.

Interstate Information Item 1) I-80/Exit 308 Realignment- cashflow project to match current project schedule. The source is the Interstate Contingency Line Item. Action 1) 903 over Mud Run- increase to cover negotiated amount plus internal costs for start of PE phase. 3004 over Meixell Creek- advance funding to cover negotiated amount plus internal costs for start of PE phase. The sources are Stites Tunnel Bridge, 715 over McMichaels Creek, 209 Bus over Kettle Creek, SR 3010 over Pohopoco Creek, 309 McAdoo and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Statewide Informational Item 1) PA 248 Rehabilitation- Advancing PE phase. The source is the State Highway Reserve Line Item and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 2) SR 115- Effort Corridor- increase to cover Final Design supplement. The sources are the Safety Line Item and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 3) SR 6 Paving Phase 2- Increase construction phase to PS&E estimate. The source is the NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item. Action 4) NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item- technical correction to return STP funding to District 4-0 Line Item in FFY 2019. Action 5) Columbia St. Arch Bridge- advance to cover agreement amount plus internal costs. 924 over 4030, RR & Mahanoy Creek- advance to better align with anticipated need in construction. The sources are cash flowed from various projects and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Amendment 1) 209/115 Intersection Improvements Phase 2- this amendment was approved by email ballot. Action 6) I-80 Bridge Ramp to SR 8024- advance and increase to cover drainage modifications, additional milling and wearing course work. The sources are Interchange Road Centerline Align, Gold Star Highway Resurface, Deer Lake North and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 7) Golf Drive over Buck Hill Branch- release excess funds from PE since the project received regular authority off the 2017 TIP and advance Final Design. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 8) 209/115 Intersection Improvement Phase 2 ROW- align project with actual need. The sources are the construction phase of the project, 209/715 Intersection Improvement, I-80 Median Barrier PE and CON phases. Action 9) I-80 Wayfinding- assign deobligation from PE to construction. Action 10) Gordon Mtn. Rd Truck Signing- increase to fully fund construction. The source is the SR 61/209 Intersection Improvement project.

b) Transit Amendments and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted an administrative action and an amendment for the Monroe County Transportation Authority. Ms. Howarth presented the actions.

Action 1) Facility Surveillance/Security- MCTA used a portion of the funds on bus surveillance cameras and have a balance remaining which will be applied toward facility security and surveillance.

Amendment 1) Server Replacement- MCTA's existing network relies on a good functioning server. The current server was put into service in 2009 and is due for replacement.

Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion to approve the MCTA Server Replacement Amendment. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Transportation Planning & Programs

a) Current Project Status

Ms. Bishop provided an update on highway projects in District 4-0.

Mr. Vottero provided an update on highway projects in District 5-0.

b) 2021-2024 TIP Update

Mr. Baranski stated that the Financial Guidance Work Group has been putting together guidance for the TIP update. We attended a Planning Partners meeting in Grantville last week. The meeting included a reveal of all the guidance documents for the TIP update including financial guidance and general and procedural guidance. The Financial Guidance has a significantly revised funding formula for distribution of TIP funds to the different planning partners regions. Mr. Shifflet provided a presentation on the revised financial guidance and distribution of TIP funds for the 2021 TIP. (see attached.)

Mr. Baranski stated that the financial guidance reflects the priorities in the federal transportation authorization and the emphasis that needs to be placed on the interstate system. It also addresses the improvements we have seen on bridges in poor condition. Mr. Baranski stated that the formula changes were made first and then the impacts for each planning region was revealed. Ms. Smith asked where the NEPA region ended up. Mr. Baranski stated that we need to take a closer look at the numbers but we anticipate about a 20% cut in funding. Mr. Shifflet stated that cuts range from about 18% to 22%. Mr. Shifflet stated that federal funds have remained flat. We may see more funding on the interstate in our region. The Interstate TIP has not been developed yet so we do not know which projects will be funded on the 2021 Interstate TIP. The Interstate TIP documents get added to our TIP submission documents. Mr. Baranski stated that the timing of financial guidance will help us develop our LRTP. Mr. Shifflet stated that an increase in federal funding would go a long way to help this situation. The gas tax has not been increased since 1993. The state however, has taken action to increase transportation funding on several occasions. Mr. Shifflet stated that the Interstate TIP and spike funding will be available in about two months.

c) 2018-2020 UPWP Revision and 2020-2022 UPWP Development

Mr. Baranski stated that we have a two-year work program and we are moving from year one to year two. We will need to shift funds from year one to year two. We will also take a look at the activities we identified as priorities and see how we did so far and what remains in the work program. We also need to add the Milford Borough study to year two.

Mr. Baranski stated that we participated in the UPWP Work Group which developed guidance for the development of the 2020-2022 UPWP. We will need to engage our UPWP subcommittee to help guide the development of the new UPWP and identify priority tasks for the MPO to carry out. The new guidance requires more engagement from the MPOs but we are already doing much of what is required for the UPWP development. Mr. Baranski stated that the timeline for development of the UPWP is shorter and we need to leave time for FHWA to review the draft UPWP before the MPO adopts it. We need to adopt the UPWP in January 2020. Mr. Smoker stated that the changes that FHWA is pushing won't have much of an impact in NEPA since we are already doing many of the things that are being required. Mr. Baranski stated that we are sharing our UPWP development with other MPOs as a model to follow.

We anticipate having a discussion about the current and upcoming UPWPs in August.

d) NEPA MPO Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Baranski stated that we will have an LRTP Steering Committee meeting following the conclusion of the business meeting. A lot of the guidance we received regarding the TIP Update will assist in the LRTP development.

e) Functional Classification Review

Ms. McMahan stated that we wrapped up the functional classification review for Carbon County in June with a meeting with PennDOT District 5-0. A few of the changes we originally identified will not be advanced due to concerns about funding and HOP impacts. Nettie is incorporating the changes in the map for Carbon County. Our first meeting with Schuylkill County will be held at the end of August.

f) Milford Traffic Study Funding

Mr. Baranski stated that the funding we received will be incorporated into year two of our UPWP. We have a scope of work from Michael Baker International that we will review with Pike County. We are working on identifying the local match and members of the steering committee to guide the study. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz asked how much funding was received. Mr. Baranski stated that we received \$60,000 in supplemental planning funds and will seek a \$15,000 match. Mr. Green asked if the study will take about a year. Mr. Mrozinski stated that the plan needs to address the conditions in the summer season so it may roll into next year. Mr. Baranski stated that we have flexibility on the one-year timeline and we'll work to make sure we address all of the seasonal conditions.

g) Jim Thorpe Parking Study

Mr. Baranski stated that the study is wrapping up. A meeting with borough council and the steering committee was held earlier in July to reveal the findings and recommendations in the plan. The report will be finalized shortly. There was no single major solution identified in the study but many smaller fixes to address the parking and congestion issues. There needs to be cooperation from all the parties involved to solve the issues and implement the recommendations from the study. The consultant will present to the technical committee in the coming months.

h) PennDOT Connects Initiative

Mr. Baranski stated that the PennDOT Connects meetings continue. We still plan to do outreach on PennDOT Connects during the LRTP outreach efforts.

i) Commuter Services

Ms. Scribbick stated that they have done events with CareerLink. With the app, they can search for rides before they take a job so they know they can get there before they accept a job. They have also done new hire orientations at Walmart, Hudson Bay, Great Wolf Lodge and Johnson and Johnson. They are also doing new student orientations at Lehigh-Carbon Community College and Penn State Schuylkill. They are also doing a Try Transit day at Sanofi Pasteur.

4) Other Business

None.

5) Adjournment

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 11:00 a.m.