

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

September 21, 2021 Technical Planning Committee

Meeting Summary and Minutes

9:30 a.m.

Meeting Location:

NEPA Alliance Office and
Microsoft Teams Videoconference

Attendees:	Organization:	Attendees:	Organization:
Dave Bekisz*	STS	Mike Mrozinski*	Pike Co. Planning
David Bodnar*	Carbon Co. Planning	John Petrini	PennDOT District 4-0
John Christy*	Mo. Co. Commissioner	Emma Pugh	PennDOT District 4-0
Brendan Cotter*	CCCT/LANTA	Jason Skrimcovsky	Carbon Co. Planning
Steve Fisher*	PennDOT District 4-0	Susan Smith*	Schuylkill Co. Planning
Marta Gabriel	Sen. Toomey's Office	Matt Smoker	FHWA
George Halcovage	Sch. Co. Commissioner	Brian Snyder*	Pike Co. Planning
Kathy Henderson	CCEDC	Scott Vottero	PennDOT District 5-0
Peggy Howarth*	MCTA		
Vanessa Koenigkramer*	PennDOT District 5-0	Alan Baranski	NEPA Alliance
Chris Kufro	PennDOT District 5-0	Jeff Box	NEPA Alliance
Randy Miller	Orwigsburg Borough	Nettie Ginocchetti	NEPA Alliance
Jim Mosca*	PennDOT Central	Kate McMahon	NEPA Alliance
Christine Meinhart-Fritz*	Monroe Co. Planning	Daniel Yelito	NEPA Alliance

*Technical Committee members who voted at this meeting

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

During this meeting, the MPO Technical Committee voted on the following actions:

Action 1: Mr. Bodnar requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2021 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Mr. Bodnar requested a motion to confirm the August 27, 2021 Email Ballot on the MCTA Amendments. A motion was made by Mr. Christy, seconded by Mr. Mosca. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: Mr. Bodnar requested a motion of Amendment 1- Mt. Carbon Bowstring Truss Bridge. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Bekisz. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 4: Mr. Bodnar requested a motion to approve the STS Amendments 1-9. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 5:

Mr. Bodnar called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1) Business Items

- a) Approval of minutes from the July 20, 2021 Business Meeting
Mr. Bodnar requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the July 20, 2021 meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Mr. Cotter to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
- b) Confirmation of the August 27, 2021 Email Ballot on MCTA Amendments
Ms. McMahon stated that the amendments from MCTA was approved by email ballot by a vote of 12 yays and 0 nays. Mr. Bodnar requested a motion to confirm the August 27, 2021 Email Ballot on the MCTA Amendments. A motion was made by Mr. Christy, seconded by Mr. Mosca. The motion passed unanimously.

2) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

- a) District 4-0 and 5-0 2021-2024 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions
Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted administrative actions on the 2021 TIP for District 4-0 and 5-0. Mr. Fisher highlighted actions for District 4-0, Ms. Koenigkramer highlighted actions for District 5-0.

Action 1- SR 6 over Delaware River- add PE phase to the TIP. The source is the Milford-Bushkill #2 project. Action 2- Reloc. Msg. Board 78 WB to 81 NB- add regional STP to TSMO project. The sources are Tremont Road over Swatara Creek and Upgrade Analog CCTVs to Digital. Interstate Informational Item 1- I-80 Phase 2- Recon. (Bartonsville)- cash flowing funds on PE phase. The source is the Interstate Contingency Line Item. Action 3- Fairview Outlet Bridge- advance and increase CON phase per estimate. The Source is Milford-Bushkill #2 and the NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item. Action 4- P/S Box Beam Bridge Bundle- increase to cover final invoice amount. Columbia Street Arch Bridge- increase to cover revised estimate. SR 715 over Pocono Creek- increase to align YOE and better align with anticipated need. The sources are Hollow Road Bridge, NEPA Bridge Preservation and Repair 6 and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 5- NEPA AWPM 2021- advance funding for low bid increase. The sources are 209 over Swatara Creek and South Tamaqua Bridge. Interstate Informational Items 2, 3, 4 and 5- NHPP and HSIP adjustments to align projects with need for the end of the fiscal year. Statewide Informational Item 1- Co. Br. 114 (Zimmerman Br.)- advance to align with anticipated obligation. The source is the STP Reserve Line Item. Statewide Informational Item 2- Mervine Road Bridge Replacement- add PE, FD, UTL and CON phases to TIP. The source is the Multimodal Reserve Line Item. Action 6- NEPA Brg Preserve and Repair 6- 185 adjustments for the end of the fiscal year. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 7- NHPP adjustments for the end of the fiscal year. Action 8- SR 4004 over Pocono Creek- increase to cover AUC on project. The sources are Thornhurst Bridge and NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 9- SR 390 over Bridge Creek- add UTL phase for relocations. The source is the NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item. Action 10- County Br. 12 over Mud Run- increase to revised estimate and include local match. The sources are Mill Pond Road over Pohopoco Creek and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Statewide Informational Items 3, 4, 5 and 6- align HSIP with obligations for the end of the fiscal year. Spike STP for 50% match. Amendment 1- Mt. Carbon Bowstring Truss Dismantle- project added to the 2021 TIP. The source is Schuylkill Ave. Bridge SB (in RATS MPO). Action 11- Kunkletown Road over Princess Run- increase for estimate plus YOE and push out funds to align with anticipated need. Restoration from PSU to St. Clair- advance STP funds available in the region for possible regular authority. Columbia Street Arch Bridge- align with anticipated need. The sources are SR 115- Effort Corridor Imp, Tremont Rd over Swatara Creek, 924 over 4030, RR & Mahanoy Creek and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 12- 443 Roadway Improvements- increase to cover work orders including protective fence and

manholes. The source is the Urban Reserve Line Item. Action 13, 14, 15 and 16- end of the fiscal year adjustments. Interstate Informational Item 6- I-80- I-380 Tannersville Resurface- increase project to match low bid plus inspection amount. The source is the Interstate Contingency Line Item.

Mr. Baranski stated that the Mt. Carbon Bowstring Truss project is interesting since it is to remove and store a historic truss bridge which will be used for a trail project. The funding is coming from the Reading MPO and Lehigh Valley MPO. Ms. Koenigkramer stated that there will be another action to add the funds from Lehigh Valley. Ms. McMahon stated that the funds are mitigation funds from projects in those regions that we are using to save a historic truss bridge in our region.

Mr. Bodnar requested a motion of Amendment 1- Mt. Carbon Bowstring Truss Bridge. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Bekisz. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Transit Amendments and Administrative Actions

Mr. Bekisz highlighted amendments and actions for Schuylkill Transit System. Amendment 1- Small Transit Vehicles (3)- purchase of 3 small transit vehicles for Shared Ride Program. Amendment 2- County Communication System- replace current 2 way radio system by joining county communication system. Amendment 3- Small Transit Vehicles (6)- purchase of 6 small transit vehicles for shared ride program. Amendment 4- CNG Bus Purchase- purchase of 1 CNG bus for fixed route service to replace diesel bus. Amendment 5- Small Transit Vehicles (4)- purchase of 4 small transit vehicles for shared ride program. Action 1- Expansion Purchase- CDL- purchase 2 CDL vehicles for shared ride program. Amendment 6- Hardware Asset- replacement of charging cabinet for MDTs used for Ecolane. Action 2- Building Equipment- purchase of equipment for building not included in contract. Amendment 7- Small Transit Vehicles (2)- purchase of 2 transit vans for shared ride program. Amendment 8- Support Vehicle- purchase of vehicle to replace outdated road service vehicle. Amendment 9- Support Vehicle- purchase of dump truck to replace truck that has met its useful life.

Mr. Bodnar requested a motion to approve the STS Amendments 1-9. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Ms. Smith. The motion passed unanimously.

3) **Transportation Planning & Programs**

a) Current Project Status

Mr. Fisher provided an update on Major/Interstate projects and TA/MTF/ARC projects in District 4-0. Mr. Vottero provided an update on Major/Interstate projects and TA/MTF/ARC projects in District 5-0.

b) Transportation Funding Issues

Mr. Baranski stated that we are waiting to see what happens in Washington. The current federal transportation authorization bill runs out on September 30th. We are hopeful that an infrastructure bill will be passed before that, so an extension isn't necessary. Mr. Mosca agreed, saying that the legislation under consideration would have \$110 billion in new spending.

Mr. Baranski stated that on the state side, the Transportation Revenue Options Commission (TROC) issued its report at the end of July. They identified options to shift the revenue source away from the gas tax to other initiatives. One option is a user-based mileage fee. It would require the legislature to take action on it. Mr. Baranski noted that any new federal funding will require a match so additional state revenue is needed to leverage the federal funds.

Mr. Baranski also stated that we were asked by Central Office to identify priority projects in our region that could be advanced if additional funds were available. We were given parameters for the projects

which included that the total project costs must not exceed our MPO's 2023 funding allocation of \$32 million and be deliverable by 2025. We met with the districts and county planners to identify projects. We submitted 4 projects, one in each county. Many of the projects have been delayed or scaled back due to funding constraints.

c) 2023 TIP Development

Mr. Baranski said that Financial Guidance and General and Procedural Guidance were sent out to everyone. The Financial Guidance is based on existing funding levels. We are scheduling meetings with the districts to review the status of current TIP projects, how much funding is available and work to position new projects for inclusion on the draft 2023 TIP. The first meeting with District 5 is scheduled for October 5th. We will also schedule a meeting with District 4 to review the projects in Pike County.

Ms. McMahon noted that as part of the TIP development, we have to look at environmental justice populations to determine current asset conditions in other areas and consider them when developing the TIP. There is also training scheduled to review the Bridge Asset Management System (BAMS) and Pavement Asset Management (PAMS) outputs. These computer systems review current asset conditions and provide recommendations based on lowest lifecycle cost. They also need to be considered during the TIP development. Mr. Baranski stated that we also need to consider projects for the CMAQ funding in Carbon County.

d) 2022-2024 UPWP Development

Mr. Baranski stated that we are again developing our two-year work program. We have convened our UPWP Subcommittee. We held a kickoff meeting in August to review our current work program and the status of the deliverables. We have a working draft of the 2022-2024 UPWP. We will go through the draft with the subcommittee following this meeting. We plan to have a complete draft including the budget tables by the October meeting. We will be seeking approval from the Technical Committee to submit it to FHWA and PennDOT for a 45-day review. In December, the Technical Committee will take action to recommend it to the Policy Board. The Policy Board will consider it in early January.

e) RFQ For Consultant Services

Mr. Baranski stated that Michael Baker International is our current consultant. They completed the Strategic Plan and LRTP update and are currently working on the Milford Traffic Study. Their contract is up at the end of December. We would like to put out an RFQ for another consultant for an open-end contract for the update of the LRTP and other plans as needed. The timeline for the RFQ and consultant selection below was discussed.

- September 23, 2021 – Public Notice for RFQ advertised in area newspapers, via the NEPA website and social media;
- October 22, 2021 – RFQ Response Packages due;
- November 5, 2021 – NEPA MPO Technical Committee RFQ Workgroup meeting to evaluate RFQs and selection of top firm(s) to present before the Tech Committee;
- November 16, 2021 – Presentations by top three firms at NEPA MPO Technical Committee meeting and selection of firm to negotiate scope of services and contract;
- December 21, 2021 – NEPA MPO Technical Committee Meeting: Finalization of Scope of Services and Contract terms; Recommendation Action by Tech Committee for approval by Policy Board;
- January 5, 2022 - Award of Contract and Notice to Proceed

f) Functional Classification Review

Ms. McMahon stated that we had another call with Central Office to address the issue of Rt. 6 in Wayne County since they would like to see that submitted with the section in Pike County. Central Office has

provided us with the necessary spreadsheet for the change and Ms. Ginocchetti is working on including Wayne County in the mapping. We are still working through the issue with the roads we proposed to reclassify as principal arterials. PennDOT did not agree with adding those roads to the National Highway System. We are also looking at issues with HOPs on those roads.

4) Other Business

Mr. Baranski stated that the State LRTP and Freight Plan are currently out for public comment. We plan to include information on it in an upcoming transportation newsletter. The comment period is open through October 19th.

A new application round of the PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund is now open and applications are being accepted through November 5th. The Transportation Alternatives Set Aside program is also currently open. Applicants had to submit a pre-application by mid-August and meetings with the applicants are being conducted. We are aware of three applications in the NEPA MPO region that will be moving forward. We anticipate having presentations from the applicants at the November meeting.

Mr. Baranski also stated that the program review for the NEPA MPO will be held on October 14th. It is similar to a certification review that the larger MPOs go through. A formal report and findings will be issued after the meeting. We will engage the Technical Committee to review a draft of the report and provide comments on it prior to it being finalized.

Mr. Baranski also provided an update on the Eastern PA Freight Plan. We secured \$280,000 in supplemental planning funds. A meeting is being held next week and an RFQ/RFP for a consultant for the plan will be issued shortly. We anticipate the plan being completed by June 2023.

5) Adjournment

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 10:35 a.m.