

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

September 19, 2023 Technical Planning Committee

Meeting Summary and Minutes

9:30 a.m.

Attendees:

David Alas*
Megan Beste
Chris Barrett
Marie Bishop
David Bodnar*
Casey Bottiger
Amy Cozze
Kerri Cutright
Nyomi Evans
Steve Fisher*
Brian Funkhouser
Micah Gursky
Doyle Heffley*
Kathy Henderson*
AJ Jordan*

Organization:

PennDOT Central
Rep. Wild's Office
PMVB
PennDOT District 4-0
Carbon Co. Planning
Michael Baker Intl.
Sen. Casey's Office
PennDOT District 5-0
PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 4-0
Michael Baker Intl.
St. Luke's Hospital
PA State Representative
CCEDC
LANTA

Attendees:

Gary Martinaitis*
Christine Meinhart-Fritz*
Mike Mrozinski*
John Petrini
Gene Porochniak
Emma Pugh
Jeff Rai
Dave Rostron
Jennifer Ruth*
Rich Schlameuss*
Brian Snyder*
Susan Smith*

Nettie Ginocchetti
Kate McMahon

Organization:

STS
Monroe Co. Planning
Pike Co. Planning
PennDOT District 4-0
FHWA
PennDOT District 4-0
PennDOT District 5-0
PennDOT District 5-0
PennDOT District 5-0
MCTA
Pike Co. Planning
Schuylkill Co. Planning

NEPA Alliance
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: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the August 15, 2023 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Schlameuss, seconded by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the 2022-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment to add additional Federal Planning, and Increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options funding. A motion was made by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, seconded by Mr. Mrozinski. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the SR 590 Paving Project Amendment. A motion was made by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, seconded by Mr. Alas. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Smith called the meeting to order at 9:30 a.m.

1) Business Items

- a) Approval of Minutes from the August 15, 2023 Technical Committee Business Meeting
Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the August 15, 2023 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Schlameuss, seconded by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.
- b) Approval of 2022-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment to add Additional Federal Planning and, Increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options Funding
Ms. McMahon stated that additional funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) needs to be added to our current work program. Some of the funding is federal planning and it needs to be matched by NEPA funds. In addition, there is a new category of funding called Increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options funding. That funding can be used for active transportation such as bike and pedestrian modes. We plan to use both types of funding for the development of an Active Transportation plan which is included in our current work program. We anticipate starting the plan under the current work program and possibly completing it during the next UPWP. Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the 2022-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment to add additional Federal Planning, and Increasing Safe and Accessible Transportation Options funding. A motion was made by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, seconded by Mr. Mrozinski. The motion passed unanimously.

2) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

- a) District 4-0 and 5-0 2023-2026 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions
Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted administrative actions on the 2023 TIP for District 4-0 and 5-0. Mr. Fisher highlighted the actions for District 4-0. Ms. Ruth highlighted the actions for District 5-0.

Action 1- Red Rock Road over Paradise Creek- advance PE. Smith Hill Road over Appenzell Creek- advance PE. Brockton Mtn. Road- align with anticipated need. The sources are County Br. #12 over Mud Run, 1004 over Forest Hills Run, Long Pond Rd over Tunkhannock Creek and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 2- Columbia Street Arch Bridge- increase with available BOF funding. The sources are the Hunters Creek Bridge, Kunkletown Rd over Princess Run, NEPA Bridge Overlay Bundle #2 and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 3- 715 over McMichael's Creek- advance and reduce for low bid adjustment. The sources are Construction Assistance, 924 over 4030, RNR & Mahanoy Creek, NEPA Bridge Overlay Bundle #2 and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 4- 209-Schafer School House- advance funding with available STP and STU in the region. The sources are the Amtrak Passenger Rail, TE/TA Project Management, Construction Assistance and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 5- 903 over Mud Run- increase for utility estimate. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 6- Lincoln Drive over Railroad- increase to revised estimate and cash flow over two years. The sources are Brockton Mtn Rd over Locust Creek and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 7- 209 & 33 over Appenzell Creek- increase to cover supplement for final design. The source is the Hamilton West Resurface- Sciota and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Statewide Action 1- I-84 Cable Median Barrier- increase to cover new estimate. The source is the HSIP Set Aside Reserve. Action 8- St. Clair to Frackville Reconstruction- increase for additional ROW acquisition services. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Statewide Action 2- 209- Schafer School House- release due to UTL being fully funded off the 2021 TIP. Statewide Action 3- NEPA Low Cost Signal Upgrades- release due to low bid savings. Action 9- SR 6 Paving- increase for unforeseen repairs to pavement and subbase including shoulder areas and prime coat. The sources are SR 6 over Wallenpaupack Creek, SR 590 Pipes and the NEPA 4-0 Highway Reserve. Statewide Action 4- Rt. 61 St. Clair to Frackville Reconstruction- add HSIP funds. The source is the HSIP Set Aside Reserve. Statewide Action 5- SR 209 & Raush Creek

Railroad Signal Upgrade- Add Green Light Go project to the TIP. Action 10, Action 11 and Statewide Action 6- 115-Effort Corridor Improvements- add HSIP funds to release STP funds. Statewide Action 7- Croasdale Road (T-420) over Cherry Creek- increase FLAP funds to cover new estimate. Statewide Action 8- SR 54 Barnesville Railroad Crossing- add Railroad Crossing Project to TIP. The source is the RRX Reserve Line Item.

Amendment 1- SR 590 Federal Paving- the project is to add earmark funds secured by Congressman Cartwright. \$600,000 in state 581 funds are also added to provide the necessary match. The source of the 581 funds is the NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item. Mr. Mrozinski asked if the total project cost is \$3 million. Ms. McMahon stated that the total project was \$3 million but the earmark funds were \$2.4 million and required a 20% state match. Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the SR 590 Paving Project Amendment. A motion was made by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, seconded by Mr. Alas. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Transportation Planning & Programs

a) Current Project Status

Mr. Fisher provided an update on TASA/MTF/ARC/FLAP projects in District 4-0. Ms. Cutright provided an update on TASA/MTF/ARC/FLAP projects in District 5-0.

Mr. Gursky provided an update on the Coaldale Rural Hospital Pedestrian Facilities project. Mr. Gursky stated that the President of Coaldale Council is no longer the president. The Borough Council voted at their recent meeting to keep the scope of the project and they would like to move forward with the project without the sidewalks. They did convey that to their engineer. Ms. Cutright thanked Mr. Gursky for the update.

b) NEPA MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Ms. McMahon stated that the MPO meeting will be followed by a meeting of the LRTP Steering Committee and we will discuss the plan development more during the meeting. She stated that the remaining public listening sessions were held in Carbon and Schuylkill counties. Mr. Funkhouser stated that on September 27th, we will present results from the proposed program and how they interact with environmental features to the Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM).

c) 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)/Twelve Year Program

Ms. McMahon stated that the next step in the TIP development process is meeting with the districts. Meetings with the districts have been scheduled for October and November. The meeting with District 5 is scheduled for October 18th and the meeting with District 4 is scheduled for November 8th. Both meetings will be held in-person at the district offices. If the county planners cannot attend, we will work to offer a virtual option. At the meetings, we will review the current TIP and determine which projects should be carried onto the 2025 TIP. Once that is determined, we will know how much funding is remaining and can discuss new projects moving on to the TIP. Ms. McMahon stated that staff is also working on the Environmental Justice (EJ) analysis. We have to do mapping of the EJ areas in our region so we can consider those areas as we develop projects for the TIP. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz asked if the EJ areas can be shared. Ms. McMahon stated that we can share the mapping. It should not be significantly different that two years ago. The EJ mapping is based on the American Community Survey data, not the decennial census data so it is updated more frequently.

d) Eastern PA Freight Study

Ms. McMahon stated that study development is moving along. The public outreach for the development of the freight plan is ongoing. WSP has developed a survey for the public to provide input on freight issues. There have been about 150 responses so far. We have been sharing the survey through our

newsletters and on social media. The other four MPOs in the study are doing the same. In addition, stakeholder meetings have been scheduled for September 26th. A meeting for Pike and Monroe counties will be held in the morning at the ESU Innovation Center. The meeting for Carbon and Schuylkill counties will follow in the afternoon at SEDCO office in Union Station in Pottsville. We invited economic development staff from each county and other freight stakeholders. We also invited PennDOT to the meetings, particularly the county maintenance managers since they are on the ground and have a good idea of where freight is moving within their county. WSP will be doing a brief presentation and then be leading a discussion to get on-the-ground feedback for the plan. Ms. Smith asked about the response for the survey. Ms. McMahon stated we would like a better response to the survey. Rep. Heffley asked if the PMTA had been invited. Ms. McMahon stated that we did invite the PMTA to the stakeholder meetings. We also invited some warehouse and distribution staff but it is difficult to get them to attend a meeting. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz suggested that Rep. Heffley send the survey out in his newsletter. Ms. Smith asked if we could get an idea how many responses are just from our MPO region. Ms. McMahon will request an update from WSP.

e) Functional Classification Update

Ms. McMahon stated that there is no update at this point. The package of changes is still under review by FHWA. If we receive an update from FHWA, we will pass it along.

f) 2024-2025 UPWP Development Process

Ms. McMahon stated that staff has developed a draft UPWP based on the previous UPWP but it is not complete. Unfortunately, we still have not received UPWP guidance from Central Office. The guidance is likely to be similar to the previous version, however, it should include some changes due to the passage of IIJA. We had hoped to provide the committee with a draft UPWP at this meeting, however, that is not possible without the guidance. Mr. Alas stated that the guidance is in the final stages of review in Central Office. Ms. McMahon stated that the timeline has been adjusted a bit. Our current plan is to provide a full draft of the UPWP at the meeting on October 10th, assuming that we receive the guidance soon. We will have about two weeks for the committee to review the draft and then take an email ballot to endorse sending the draft to FHWA. We are still on target to get the draft UPWP to FHWA for a 45-day review period. Endorsement of the UPWP is still targeted for the December meeting.

4) Other Business

None.

5) Adjournment

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