

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

December 19, 2023 Technical Planning Committee

Meeting Summary and Minutes

9:30 a.m.

Attendees:

David Alas*
Marie Bishop
David Bodnar*
Casey Bottiger
Chris Chapman
Brendan Cotter*
Carol Etheridge
Nyomi Evans
Steve Fisher*
Micah Gursky
Kathy Henderson
Doyle Heffley*
Gary Martinaitis*
Mike Mrozinski*
Christine Meinhart-Fritz*

Organization:

PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 4-0
Carbon Co. Planning
Michael Baker Intl.
DCED
LANTA
Rep. Wild's Office
PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 4-0
St. Luke's Hospital
CCEDC
PA State Representative
STS
Pike Co. Planning
Monroe Co. Planning

Attendees:

Gene Porochniak
Emma Pugh
Jeff Rai
Jennifer Ruth
Rich Schlameuss*
Brian Snyder*
Susan Smith*
Scott Vottero*
Garry Wentz*

Alan Baranski
Nettie Ginocchetti
Kate McMahan
Daniel Yelito

Organization:

FHWA
PennDOT District 4-0
PennDOT District 5-0
PennDOT District 5-0
MCTA
Pike Co. Planning
Schuylkill Co. Planning
PennDOT District 5-0
NEPA Board

NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance
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 November 21, 2023 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Alas to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve Amendment 1- Rt 61 St. Clair to Frackville Reconstruction. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Schlameuss. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend adoption of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Air Quality Conformity Analysis Report to the NEPA MPO Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Schlameuss. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 4: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend adoption of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Air Quality Conformity Analysis Resolution to the NEPA MPO Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Alas, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 5: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend adoption of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan to the NEPA MPO Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Schlameuss, seconded by Mr. Alas. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 6: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the committee to recommend approval of the 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to the NEPA MPO Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 7: Ms. Smith requested a motion adopting the 2024 HSIP Performance Measure targets proposed by the state. A motion to adopt the safety targets established by PennDOT was made by Mr. Cotter, 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 November 21, 2023 Technical Committee Business Meeting
Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the November 21, 2023 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Alas to approve the minutes. 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 Districts 4-0 and 5-0. Mr. Fisher highlighted the actions for District 4-0 and Mr. Alas highlighted the actions for District 5-0.

District 4-0

Action 1- SR 390 over Outlet Promised Land- add FD phase. The source is the NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item. Action 2- SR 209 over Sawkill Creek- add additional FLAP funds to CON phase. Action 3- SR 6 over Delaware River- switch CON funding for balancing. SR 6 over Wallenpaupack Creek and PPL Flume. The source is the NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item. Action 4- add additional funds to SR 209 over Sawkill Creek CON phase. The sources are SR 6 over Delaware River, SR 390 over Outlet Promised Land and NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item. Action 5- SR 1014 over Westcolang Creek- begin PE with 100% state funds. The source is NEPA 4-0 Highway Line Item.

District 5-0

Statewide Action 1- I-80/Exit 308 Realignment- increase to cover additional consultant services and railroad flagging. The source is the Interstate Contingency Line Item. Action 1- Brocktown Mountain Drive over Locust Creek- advance to align with need. Increase to match 971 claim damage estimate. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 2- Hudson Drive over Beisel Creek, 191 over Rattlesnake Creek and Mauch Chunk over Norwegian Creek- add ROW phase to TIP to match 971 claim damage estimate. The source is the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Action 3- Shiffer Road over PA 33- increase to prepare additional plat plan and completed ROW plans. The source is Red Rock over Forest Hill Run. Action 4- SR 611 over Bulgers Run- add ROW phase to TIP to match 971 claim damage estimate. The source is SR 715/611 Intersection and NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Statewide Action 1- St. Clair to Frackville Reconstruction- increase CON phase to match HSIP need for low bid. The source is the HSIP Set Aside Reserve Line Item. Statewide Action 2- SR 115 Effort Corridor Improvements and NEPA Vulnerable Road User Project- reduce due to low bid savings and return funds to HSIP Set Aside Reserve Line Item.

Amendment 1- Rt 61 St. Clair to Frackville Reconstruction- increase to cover low bid. The sources are the PROTECT Reserve Line Item, the Urban Line Item Reserve and NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item. Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve Amendment 1. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Schlameuss. The motion passed unanimously.

3) **Transportation Planning & Programs**

a) Current Project Status

Mr. Fisher stated that there was no highway report from District 4 since their projects were bid, however, the SR 590 Paving project using earmark funds is expected to bid in early 2024. Mr. Vottero provided an update on the highway projects in District 5-0. Mr. Baranski asked for an update on the bids that were received for the SR 61 St. Clair to Frackville Reconstruction Project. Mr. Vottero stated that there were 3 bids received. JD Eckman was the apparent low bidder. Their bid was 6-7% over the district's estimate. The district has been working with Central Office to request additional funds to make up the difference. The district expects to issue the notice to proceed soon. Mr. Baranski stated that overall, the outcome of the bid and discussions with Central Office have been very positive.

b) NEPA MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Mr. Baranski stated that the 30-day public comment period opened on November 17th and closed on December 18th. The comment period was advertised in newspapers, on social media and through emails. A public meeting was held on December 5th with physical meeting locations in each county. We received comments at the public meeting and through email. We sent out the updated LRTP with the comments that we had received. We continued to receive comments through December 18th. Ms. Bottiger provided a presentation on the comments that were received during the comment period and how the comments were addressed in the plan. Each comment received a formal response.

Mr. Porochniak stated that the Technical Committee needs to consider the Air Quality Conformity Analysis Report before the Air Quality Conformity Resolution. Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend adoption of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Air Quality Conformity Analysis Report to the NEPA MPO Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Schlameuss. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend adoption of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Air Quality Conformity Analysis Resolution to the NEPA MPO Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Alas, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend adoption of the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan to the NEPA MPO Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Schlameuss, seconded by Mr. Alas. The motion passed unanimously.

c) 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Baranski stated that we are nearing completion of the 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program. It is a one-year work program to get on a different development schedule than the TIP. The draft UPWP was reviewed by FHWA, FTA and PennDOT Central Office. The comments we received were incorporated into the final document and it was shared with the Technical Committee and Policy Board members. The UPWP is ready for a recommendation to the Policy Board which will take action in January. Approval will be done by email ballot to then advance it to the NEPA Board of Directors for their approval since it is a contracting matter. The email ballot will be confirmed at the Policy Board meeting on January 3rd following the NEPA Board of Director's meeting.

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the committee to recommend approval of the 2024-2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to the NEPA MPO Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

d) 2024 Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) Performance Measures (PM-1)

Ms. McMahon stated that there is a letter in the meeting packet from Central Office about safety performance measures. As we have for the past several years, the MPO must adopt safety performance targets by either adopting the targets proposed by the state or coming up with our own targets. Each year, we have recommended adopting the targets proposed by the state. Ms. Smith requested a motion adopting the 2024 HSIP Performance Measure targets proposed by the state. A motion to adopt the safety targets established by PennDOT was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Mr. Alas. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Mr. Baranski stated that the TIP development process is ongoing. Two meetings were held with District 5 and an initial meeting with District 4 was held. Another meeting with District 4 will occur following the conclusion of this Technical Committee meeting to finalize the draft TIP for submission to Central Office. A TIP review meeting with Central Office will be held in January. The county planners will be invited to attend that meeting. Spike funds were announced recently. Spike funding for the 611/715 intersection project and 2 Pike County \$5 fee bridges was maintained. The draft Interstate TIP is forthcoming. Adoption of the 2025 TIP and related documents will occur next spring.

f) Functional Classification Update

Ms. McMahon stated that a letter was included in the meeting packet from FHWA for partial approval of the functional classification changes. The approval is only partial because the requested changes for Route 6 in Pike and Wayne counties are changes on the National Highway System and those must be approved by FHWA headquarters. Mr. Porochniak stated that we are waiting for approval of those changes and we should receive it soon. Ms. Smith asked when the functional classification changes will affect project designs? Mr. Vottero stated that it would depend on where projects are in the process and the type of work being done. Major rehabilitations would be impacted.

g) Eastern PA Freight Study

Mr. Baranski stated that staff attended a freight plan stakeholder session for the Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO earlier this month. Ms. McMahon stated that sessions were also held in the Lehigh Valley MPO and the Lebanon MPO as well. A virtual stakeholder session is planning for the Reading MPO in January. The plan will be completed by June 2024, at the latest.

4) **Other Business**

Mr. Baranski stated that the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) announced that the New York City to Scranton intercity rail project has been accepted into the Corridor ID Program. It is the first step in a 3-step process to reestablish passenger rail between the cities. There is a rally tonight at Kalahari Resorts at 6pm. Mr. Gursky stated that the FRA also announced that the Philadelphia to Reading intercity rail project was also accepted into the Corridor ID Program. That project would ultimately reestablish passenger rail service into Schuylkill County.

5) **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 10:25 a.m.