

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

April 16, 2024 Joint Technical Planning Committee and Policy Board

Meeting Summary and Minutes

9:30 a.m.

Attendees:

David Alas*
Chris Barrett^
Marie Bishop
David Bodnar*
Casey Bottiger
Roger Christman*
John Christy*
Brendan Cotter*
Kerri Cutright
Nyomi Evans
Steve Fisher*
Micah Gursky^
Doyle Heffley*
Chris Kufro
Christine Meinhart-Fritz*
Mike Mrozinski*

Organization:

PennDOT Central
PMVB
PennDOT District 4-0
Carbon Co. Planning
Michael Baker Intl.
Ross Township
Monroe Co. Commiss.
LANTA
PennDOT District 5-0
PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 4-0
St. Luke's Hospital
State Representative
PennDOT District 5-0
Monroe Co. Planning
Pike Co. Planning

Attendees:

Larry Peterson
John Petrini
Emma Pugh
Jeff Rai
Jennifer Ruth*
Rich Schlameuss*
Joe Sebelin^
Susan Smith*
Brian Snyder*
Mark Tobin^

Alan Baranski
Nettie Ginocchetti
Kate McMahon
Daniel Yelito

Organization:

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

NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance
NEPA Alliance

*Technical Committee members who voted at this meeting

^Policy Board members who voted at this meeting

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

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

Action 1 Mr. Gursky requested a motion from the Policy Board to approve the minutes from the January 3, 2024 Policy Board Meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2024 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski, seconded by Mr. Alas to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 3: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve Amendment 1 to add the SR 443 Extended Limits Project to the TIP. A motion was made by Mr. Bodnar, seconded by Mr. Schlameuss. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 4: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend the Public Participation Plan for adoption by the Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 5: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend the Title VI Plan for adoption by the Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Schlameuss, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 6: Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend the Limited English Proficiency Plan for adoption by the Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Christy, seconded by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 7: Mr. Gursky requested a motion from the Policy Board to adopt the Public Participation Plan. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 8: Mr. Gursky requested a motion from the Policy Board to adopt the Title VI Plan. A motion was made by Mr. Tobin, seconded by Mr. Sebelin. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 9: Mr. Gursky requested a motion from the Policy Board to adopt the Limited English Proficiency Plan. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

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

1) Business Items

a) Policy Board Approval of Minutes from the January 3, 2024 Business Meeting

Mr. Gursky requested a motion from the Policy Board to approve the minutes from the January 3, 2024 Policy Board Meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

b) Technical Committee Approval of Minutes from the March 19, 2024 Business Meeting

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the March 19, 2024 Technical Committee meeting. A motion was made by Mr. Mrozinski, 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 District 5-0. Ms. Ruth highlighted the actions for District 5-0. There were no actions for District 4-0.

Action 1- 209 & 33 over Appenzell Creek- increase construction phase to meet low bid. The sources are the utility phase of the project, 209 Business over Kettle Creek and Kunkletown Road over Princess Run.

Action 2- Delivery Consultant Assistance- increase for ongoing project management. The sources are SR 715/611 Intersection and the NEPA Highway and Bridge Line Item.

Amendment 1- SR 443 Extended Limits- add project to the TIP to complete resurfacing of SR 443. The sources are Scotrun-Swiftwater and 443 Roadway Improvements deobligations. Ms. Smith asked if the project will be carried over to the 2025 TIP. Ms. Ruth stated that it will be completed on the 2023 TIP and not carried over. Ms. Meinhart-Fritz asked about the limits of the project. Mr. Kufro stated that the resurfacing goes to the limits of an older HOP project. He later clarified in the meeting chat that it was the HOP for the Lehigh Valley Hospital project. Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve Amendment 1 to add the SR 443 Extended Limits Project to the TIP. A motion was made by Mr. Bodnar, seconded by Mr. Schlameuss. The motion passed unanimously.

3) Transportation Planning & Programs

a) Current Project Status

Ms. Ruth provided an update on Major/Interstate projects in District 5-0. Ms. Smith noted that she attended a meeting about the SR 61 Reconstruction Project for emergency management personnel and the project manager from JD Eckman was very impressive. The SR 61 project is moving along and the tree removal is underway.

b) Public Participation Plan, Title VI Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan

Ms. Bottiger from Michael Baker International provided a presentation on the public comment period for the Public Participation Plan, Title VI Plan and Limited English Proficiency Plan and the comments that were received (see attached). Mr. Baranski stated that the comments have been incorporated in the final drafts of the plans and they were emailed out yesterday.

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend the Public Participation Plan for adoption by the Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Cotter, seconded by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend the Title VI Plan for adoption by the Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Schlameuss, seconded by Mr. Cotter. The motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Smith requested a motion from the Technical Committee to recommend the Limited English Proficiency Plan for adoption by the Policy Board. A motion was made by Mr. Christy, seconded by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gursky requested a motion from the Policy Board to adopt the Public Participation Plan. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gursky requested a motion from the Policy Board to adopt the Title VI Plan. A motion was made by Mr. Tobin, seconded by Mr. Sebelin. The motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Gursky requested a motion from the Policy Board to adopt the Limited English Proficiency Plan. A motion was made by Mr. Sebelin, seconded by Mr. Tobin. The motion passed unanimously.

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

Ms. McMahon stated that we are nearing completion of the 2025 TIP development. Copies of the Bridge and Highway and Interstate TIP/TYP project lists and public narratives were shared with the committees prior to the meeting. The transit TIPs are being finalized and the Air Quality Conformity Analysis is being conducted by Central Office. Staff is working on supporting documentation including project selection summary, performance measures, Environmental Justice Analysis and public outreach activities. We expect to have the TIP package ready by the end of the month. We will ask the Technical Committee to approve putting the TIP package out for the 30-day public comment period by email ballot by May 1st. The schedule for the comment period is:

May 6, 2024- TIP Public Comment Period Opens

May 21, 2024- TIP Public Comment Meeting (prior to Technical Committee meeting)

June 14, 2024- TIP Public Comment Period Ends

June 18, 2024- Joint MPO Tech Committee/Policy Board Meeting to Consider TIP Adoption

The TIP Public Comment Meeting will be conducted at four in-person locations, with a virtual attendance option on May 21st at 9:30am. It will be followed by the Technical Committee meeting. Copies of the TIP documentation will be available at the county planning offices and the transit offices and on the NEPA website. Information about the comment period will be published in the local newspapers and we will share the information on social media and in our newsletters.

d) PROTECT Funding

Mr. Baranski stated that PROTECT funding is IJA funding targeted to address infrastructure resiliency issues. In early February, Central Office issued a memo to the MPOs and RPOs and districts to solicit projects that meet criteria such as flooding, rockslides, road closures, etc. We have had discussions with the districts and county planners to identify projects that meet the criteria for the funding. Applications for each project need to be completed by the districts and uploaded to SharePoint. Six projects were submitted by District 5- one in Schuylkill County and five in Monroe County. The Weatherly Wall Rehabilitation project in Carbon County has recently been approved for funding. A PennDOT Connects meeting was held with the borough last week. In addition, the SR 61 Reconstruction Project has received a significant amount of PROTECT funding already. In District 4, a few projects have been identified in Pike County and the applications will be submitted shortly. Mr. Fisher stated that it is an ongoing process and the district will likely have the opportunity to submit additional projects. In addition, the process will likely change with the 2027 TIP financial guidance since PROTECT funding will be allocated to each MPO/RPO rather than going through Central Office. It will be another type of funding that can be used for projects and it will be combined with funding types to complete a project.

e) Active Transportation Plan

Ms. McMahon stated that we have an executed work order with Michael Baker for the Active Transportation Plan. We're working to identify a few more members of the steering committee and then a kickoff meeting will be held in the coming weeks. At the last meeting, Commissioner Hess from Schuylkill County suggested doing outreach at the Schuylkill County Youth Summit later this month. Ms. McMahon will be present at the Youth Summit. Ms. Smith has created a survey form that students will be asked to complete. Younger people tend to walk and bike more so their input will be valuable. A full MetroQuest survey will be developed for a greater outreach later, but will require input from the Steering Committee.

f) Eastern PA Freight Study

Mr. Baranski stated that we are in the final phase of the plan development. We received a draft of the plan and staff are currently reviewing it. A call with the other MPOs and WSP is being scheduled. Once the call is held to review the draft plan, we will share it with the committee. The plan will be completed by June 2024, at the latest. We expect a presentation on the plan findings from WSP at an upcoming MPO meeting.

4) Other Business

None.

5) Adjournment

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