

Northeastern Pennsylvania Metropolitan Planning Organization

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

October 22, 2024, Technical Planning Committee Summary and Minutes **9:30 a.m.**

Attendees:

Rocky Ahner*
Marie Bishop
Casey Bottiger
Stephen Chiaramonte
Roger Christman*
John Christy*
Kerri Cutright
Nyomi Evans
Steve Fisher*
Brian Funkhouser
Micah Gursky*
Doyle Heffley*
AJ Jordan*
Robert Manzella
Gary Martinaitis*
Christine Meinhart-Fritz*

Organization:

Carbon Co. Commiss.
PennDOT District 4
Michael Baker Intl.
WSP
Ross Township
Monroe Co. Commiss.
PennDOT District 5
PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 4
Michael Baker Intl.
St. Luke's
PA House of Rep.
LANTA
Luzerne Co. Planning
STS
Monroe Co. Planning

Attendees:

Mike Mrozinski*
Larry Peterson*
John Petrini
Emma Pugh
Nick Raio*
Jeff Rai
Jennifer Ruth
Susan Smith*
Brian Snyder*
Nate Staruch
Scott Vottero

Jeff Box
Nettie Ginocchetti
Kate McMahon
Jonathan Shaw
Daniel Yelito

Organization:

Pike Co. Planning
PennDOT District 5
PennDOT District 4
PennDOT District 4
PennDOT Central
PennDOT District 5
PennDOT District 5
Schuylkill Co. Planning
Pike Co. Planning
Monroe Co. Planning
PennDOT District 5

NEPA Alliance
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NEPA Alliance

*Technical Committee 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: Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the September 17, 2024, Technical Committee Business Meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Snyder, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

Action 2: Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the submission of the 2025-2027 Unified Planning Work Program for review by FHWA, FTA, and PennDOT Central Office. A motion was made by Mr. Ahner, seconded by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, to approve the submission. 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 September 17, 2024, Technical Committee Business Meeting

Ms. Meinhart-Fritz requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the September 17, 2024, Technical Committee Business Meeting. A motion was made by Ms. Smith, seconded by Mr. Snyder, to approve the minutes. The motion passed unanimously.

2) Eastern PA Freight Infrastructure Plan

a) Presentation – Steve Chiaramonte, WSP

Mr. Chiaramonte provided a presentation on the Eastern PA Freight Infrastructure Plan (see attached). Ms. McMahon stated that the next steps will be to seek adoption of the plan and approval of the MOU to join the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance (EPFA) at the joint technical and policy board committee meeting in December. Mr. Funkhouser stated that Pennsylvania’s Freight Plan expires in 2026, and that PennDOT will begin working on an update in 2025. PennDOT plans to look at the outcomes and recommendations of the Eastern PA Freight Infrastructure Plan for anything that could apply to the statewide plan.

Mr. Mrozinski began chairing the meeting

3) TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

a) District 5 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. Mr. Peterson highlighted the actions for District 5. There were no actions for District 4.

Action 1- NEPA PM #6 – Increase to cover work orders. NEPA PM #7 – Increase to cover low bid. SR 209 & 33 over Appenzell Creek – Increase for PSP. The sources are Box Culvert Bundle – Round 1 and the NEPA Highway & Bridge Regional Line Item.

Action 2- Hamilton West Resurface & St. Clair to Frackville Reconstruction – Advance and release funds due to receiving August redistribution. The balancing sources are the Urban Line-Item Reserve and the NEPA Highway & Bridge Regional Line Item.

Action 3- Delivery Consultant Assistance- Advanced for on-going project management assistance. The sources are Hamilton West Resurface – Sciota, 209 Bus. over Kettle Creek, King St. over Sambo Creek, St. Clair to Frackville Reconstruction, and the NEPA Highway & Bridge Regional Line Item.

Action 4- Box Culvert Bundle- Round 1 – Advanced to align with need. 209 and 33 NB over Appenzell Creek – Released due to phase not being needed. The balancing source is the NEPA Highway & Bridge Regional Line Item.

Action 5- Hudson Drive over Beisel Run- Increase to cover actual costs. SR 611 over Bulgers Run – Advance to cover actual costs. NEPA Br Preserve & Repair 8 – Increase to cover supplement. Mauch Chunk St. over Norwegian Creek – Advance to cover actual costs. US 209 over NRR – Increase to cover actual costs. The sources are the Box Culvert Bundle – Round 1, and the NEPA Highway & Bridge Regional Line Item.

Action 6- SR 715 over Pocono Creek- Advance to align with anticipated need. Jim Thorpe Wall Rehabilitation- Release funds due to UTL phase not being needed. Hunters Creek Bridge- Cashflow to align with anticipated need. Weatherly Retaining Wall replacement- Release to match actual costs. PA 611 Retaining Wall Rehab- Cashflow to align with anticipated need. Kunkletown over Princess Run-

Release due to being funded off 2021 TIP. 209 Bus. over Kettle Creek- Cashflow to align with anticipated need. The balancing source is the NEPA Highway & Bridge Regional Line Item. Action 7- NEPA PM #7- advance to align with need. NEPA in House Br. Design Assist- Reduce to match encumbrance. 191 over Rattlesnake Creek- Advance to align with actual costs. 209 Bus. over Kettle Creek- Cashflow to align with anticipated need, carried on draft 2025 TIP. Main Blvd over Trib Catawissa Creek- Cashflow to align with anticipated need. Lincoln Dr. over Railroad- Reduce to match to obligation. The balancing source is the NEPA Highway & Bridge Regional Line Item.

b) District 5 2025-2028 TIP Amendments and Administrative Actions

Information was included in the meeting packet which highlighted administrative actions on the 2025 TIP for District 5. Mr. Peterson highlighted the actions for District 5. There were no actions for District 4.

Action 1- US 209 over NRR- Increase to cover PS&E estimate. The source is SR 715/611 Intersection.

Action 2- NEPA PM #6- Increased to cover supplement for inspection due to additional work. The source is NEPA PM #7.

4) **Transportation Planning & Programs**

a) Current Project Status Update – Bridge Projects

Mr. Vottero provided an update on bridge projects in District 5. Mr. Fisher provided an update on bridge projects in District 4.

b) 2025-2027 Unified Planning Work Program

Ms. McMahon stated that work has been underway to develop NEPA's 2025 to 2027 Work Program which runs from July 1, 2025 – June 30, 2027. A kickoff meeting was held in August with the UPWP Steering Committee to discuss the status of current projects and review priorities for the next two. A second steering committee meeting was held on October 10, 2024, to review the draft UPWP. Next steps for the development of the plan will be to send the draft document to FHWA and FTA for a 45-day review period. Following the review, which runs until December 6, 2024, the draft UPWP will be sent to Technical Committee and Policy Board members. The UPWP is expected to be approved at a joint meeting on December 17, 2024. The NEPA Alliance Board of Directors will need to approve the UPWP at their January 8, 2025, meeting because it is a contract. The UPWP will then be submitted to Central Office before the end of January.

Mr. Mrozinski requested a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the submission of the 2025-2027 Unified Planning Work Program for review by FHWA, FTA, and PennDOT Central Office. A motion was made by Commissioner Ahner, seconded by Ms. Meinhart-Fritz, to approve the submission. The motion passed unanimously.

c) Active Transportation Plan

Mr. Funkhouser provided a presentation on the current status of the Active Transportation Plan. Michael Baker is in the process of scheduling 20-25 stakeholder interviews across the region. Work is also being done on a Pedestrian Level of Stress (PLOS) Analysis in Pottsville, Jim Thorpe, Stroudsburg, and Milford.

d) SR 2001 Section 405 Alternatives Study

Mr. Funkhouser provided a presentation on the current status of the SR 2001 Section 405 Alternatives Study. Planning work is underway to create a road design that includes 12-foot travel lanes with 8-foot shoulders. Michael Baker will seek a design exception from PennDOT to allow for 10% grade, instead of the required 8% grade, in order to avoid more property takings. A safety evaluation of the corridor is

going to be conducted. In the most recent 5-year period, there have been 29 crashes in the corridor. NEPA staff, Pike County, and Michael Baker met with District 4-0 executives to discuss the cost challenges associated with the project. The total cost of the project is \$47 million. One year of NEPA's TIP is \$62 million. Mr. Mrozinski asked if Michael Baker has been able to contact a representative from the National Park Service (NPS). Ms. McMahon stated that NEPA staff plans to reach out to NPS LRTP stakeholders.

e) Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan

Mr. Funkhouser provided a presentation on the current status of the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan. Michael Baker has finalized a budget with subconsultant Rockland Planning. A steering committee meeting is being scheduled for November.

f) NEVI Community Charging Program

Ms. McMahon stated that funding has been provided to Pennsylvania to build out electric vehicle charging infrastructure. Funding was originally focused along interstate Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFC). Now that AFCs have been built out, funding is being extended to community charging projects. This includes public parking, government buildings, large employers, and destinations. Planning Partners have been asked to review and rank prospective charging projects by June 2025. PennDOT's survey period has ended and results with desired charging locations should be shared with Planning Partners. PennDOT is expected to hold a briefing with guidance in the coming months. NEPA staff will conduct outreach in the region to solicit additional locations if needed. Certain needs have already been identified, including Jim Thorpe and Milford. NEPA MPO expects to have the Technical Committee rank projects in Spring 2025. Commissioner Ahner asked if projects need to be located near an interstate to be eligible. Ms. McMahon stated that community projects do not need to be located near the interstate to be eligible. Commissioner Ahner stated that Jim Thorpe is in the process of identifying how many electric vehicles visit Jim Thorpe every day.

5) Other Business

Ms. McMahon stated that PennDOT's Green Light-Go program is accepting Pre-Applications. More information will be sent out to committee members in NEPA Newslines in November.

Ms. McMahon stated that NEPA is holding a Municipal Funding Forum. Information on how to register was included in NEPA's Interchanges transportation newsletter and will be sent in NEPA Newslines

6) Adjournment

There being no further business, the NEPA MPO Technical Planning Committee meeting adjourned at 10:40 a.m.