

READING AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY
MINUTES OF THE TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD VIRTUALLY
FEBRUARY 3, 2022

ATTENDANCE

TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

Scott Vottero, PennDOT 5-0, Acting Chair*
David Alas, PennDOT Central Office
Alan Piper, Berks County Planning Commission, MPO Secretary
Michael Golembiewski, Berks County Planning Commission
Jeff Glisson, SCTA
Tim Krall, City of Reading
Kyle Zeiber, City of Reading

NOT PARTICIPATING

Vacant - Reading Regional Airport Authority

OTHERS

Jennifer Crobak, FHWA
Jim Mosca, PennDOT Central
Amanda Leindecker, PennDOT 5-0
Mike Donchez, PennDOT 5-0
Vanessa Koenigkramer, PennDOT 5-0
Crystal Heshmat, PennDOT Central Office
David Hunter, Berks County Planning Commission
Regina Zdradzinski, Berks County Planning Commission
Amanda Timochenko, Berks County Planning Commission
Laura Mursch, Berks County Planning Commission
Shanice Ellison, Berks County Planning Commission
Matt Boyer, Commuter Services of PA
Marta Gabriel, Sen. Toomey
Lori Schneider, Berks County Information Systems
Malcolm Townes, Berks County Information Systems

1. CALL TO ORDER

Acting Chairman Vottero called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m.

2. BUSINESS FROM THE FLOOR

Mr. Piper stated that Mr. Stan Rugis resigned his position as Public Works Director from the City of Reading. He introduced Mr. Kyle Zeiber as the replacement for Stan Rugis from the City of Reading's Public Works Department. Mr. Piper also stated that appointments still need to be made by the Reading Regional Airport Authority for both the Technical and

Coordinating Committees. He also introduced Crystal Heshmet as our new planning liaison from PennDOT's Central Office.

3. REVIEW/APPROVAL OF MINUTES FROM THE JANUARY 6, 2022 TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING

Acting Chairman Vottero asked if there were any questions or comments on the January 6, 2022 Technical Committee meeting minutes. There were no questions or comments.

MOTION: Mr. Golembiewski made a motion to approve the minutes from January 6, 2022, as presented. Mr. Piper seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

4. PENNDOT REQUESTED AMENDMENTS/MODIFICATIONS TO FFY 2021-2024 TIP

Mr. Donchez gave an update on PennDOT's requested Amendments/Modifications to FFY 2021-2024 TIP from December 23, 2022 to January 25, 2022.

- There is one (1) Administrative Actions – this will deal with covering increased costs for Final Design and advancing funds for acquisition services on a project.
- There is one (1) Statewide Administrative Action – this involves shifting funds to adjust the cash flow for the I-78 Midway to Shartlesville project to align with the current let date for the project.
- There are no Amendments.

Mr. Piper stated that there were discussions yesterday regarding the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) additional funding. Mr. Piper explained that, when the IIJA passed last year, it was for a five-year period that included the current FFY 2022 as well as the four years of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) currently in development for FFY 2023-2026.

Additional funding in the amount of \$16.5 million will come into the region for the balance of FFY 2022. Mr. Piper stated that there will be \$800,000 for Safety; \$51,000 for CMAQ; and the remaining balance, which is just under \$16 million, is spread over Bridge and Highway programs. Acting Chairman Vottero stated that the funds are all in a Line Item at this time. They will be working to identify projects and assign the funds to those projects. Mr. Piper noted that this may have an impact on the TIP currently in development. As projects are advanced and added to the current TIP, projects programmed on the FFY 2023-2026 TIP will need to be realigned to fulfill the funding requirements. Acting Chairman Vottero said it will be a mix of new projects, balancing the out years and, hopefully, moving other projects up a year or so. No formal action is required at this time. This information will be reviewed at the next Technical Committee meeting in March 2022.

Ms. Leindecker asked Mr. Piper what the threshold is for an amendment. Mr. Piper said it is \$3 million. Mr. Mosca said that this is a good problem to have, but it is important to ensure we have time to identify growth from an eligibility standpoint by the funding categories, as well as by prioritization for the region in identifying the projects that should advance in FFY 2022.

It is appropriate to come back in March to address the potential additional projects. These actions must follow the TIP Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), and Program Management Committee (PMC) requirements just as with any other project.

Mr. Krall stated that we have been hearing about money for roads and bridges and for grants to municipalities. Does this batch of \$16 million apply? Mr. Piper said it is Federal money going through PennDOT. It is not discretionary money.

5. UPDATE ON EASTERN PA FREIGHT ALLIANCE FREIGHT PLAN RFP

Mr. Piper said the draft Scope of Work is in its final phases. Lehigh Valley Planning Commission anticipates advertising on PennBid tomorrow. Assuming the draft request for proposals goes out, the schedule in place seems to indicate that we'll be ready to work our way through the review and hiring process in order to have a consultant on board by the May or June 2022 time frame. Once Mr. Piper receives the actual RFP, more details will be provided to the committee.

6. UPDATE/DISCUSSION ON FFY 2023-2026 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT (Highway/Bridge and Transit)

Mr. Piper stated that the draft funding and project listings were distributed at the January meeting. At this point there are no changes to be made. As stated previously, once decisions are made regarding the use of the FFY 2022 IIJA funds, there may be some changes that will need to be made to the proposed FFY 2023-2026 project listing.

For projects that are on the TIP that have Air Quality status, we are making sure that all of those are coded correctly in order to start that process and progress it through the inter-agency review. Ms. Leindecker stated that a mini workshop needs to be set up between Planning staff and the District to input the new projects, if any, on the TIP. A field for Air Quality comments was added if we want to add more details regarding significance or eligibility for use of funds and/or conformity aspects. This is a new field in MPMS that information can be added to. Mr. Mosca stated that MPMS, their project management system for the draft TIP, is going to be locked down on February 21, 2022. If there are any questions regarding Air Quality Conformity/Analysis, feel free to reach out to Central Office and the District regarding projects on the draft TIP.

Mr. Mosca noted that when the MPMS system goes into lockdown, District staff no longer have the ability to make changes to projects in the system. There may be a short time frame after the lockdown that would allow Mr. Mosca to go in and adjust the TIP. When Mr. Mosca is locked out, upper management in the Program Center would have to make any adjustments. The reason is that reports need to be run statewide for projects when we look at obligations to meet performance targets at the statewide levels. Changes cannot be made to the MPMS and the TIP. Mr. Piper noted this was the prime reason to have this meeting today to ensure PennDOT and Planning staff are aware of what still needs to be done and the associated deadlines.

Mr. Mosca also stated that they do need to put the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and other processes out for a 15-day public comment period as well. Mr. Piper said the draft FFY 2023-2026 TIP is scheduled for approval in July 2022. Mr. Mosca said that it goes back to the time frame they have to get everything together to go before the State Transportation Commission in early to mid-August. After that the STIP will be submitted to the federal planning partners to begin their review.

Mr. Piper stated that the July Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for the 21st. We might need to have a joint meeting on July 7, 2022. That would give a few extra weeks to clean up the document in order to submit it on time.

7. UPDATE/DISCUSSION ON FFY 2023-2045 LRTP DEVELOPMENT

In conjunction with the TIP update, Mr. Piper stated that staff is also working to update the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). There are several sections that have been updated. Now that there is a project list, we are working on putting together mapping that goes along with the LRTP. That will allow us to proceed with some specific analysis regarding project impacts to environmental factors and the required Environmental Justice analysis. It also helps us update the performance measures sections and the overall Long-Range Transportation Plan. Mr. Piper said that he will send out a link to the draft sections that have been updated thus far. Staff will continue working on it for the next few months to complete the update to the draft FFY 2023-2045 LRTP.

Mr. Piper stated that for the LRTP, we are required to go through the Agency Coordination process. A big part of that is understanding what the project list is going to be, mapping the projects, and reviewing the projects for potential impacts to environmental resources. Once mapping and the environmental analysis is complete, a meeting will be scheduled for agency coordination with the District, Central Office and FHWA.

The TIP and the LRTP will advance through the same schedule. Mr. Piper stated that a formal commitment to the projects that are included on the draft listing in order to finalize documents will be brought to the committees in March. The draft documents would be completed and brought to the committees in May. Upon approval from the Technical and Coordinating Committees, the draft documents would go out for public review and comment in June. In July, it is anticipated that these documents will be formally adopted and submitted to the state and FHWA.

Mr. Glisson stated that there is nothing different for the FFY 2023 Transit TIP that was previously submitted. He does not think there is an impact on the LRTP. Mr. Piper stated two things needed from SCTA are the Financial Capacity section and the Transit Performance Measures section. Mr. Glisson asked if there is a time frame for this. Mr. Piper stated that the information is needed in April 2022 in order to incorporate that information into the draft document in May prior to releasing it to the public.

8. REVIEW/RECOMMENDATION ON UPDATED BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN PLAN MAPPING

Mr. Golembiewski stated that, over the last 18 months, staff has been updating the mapping for the Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. The Technical Committee was asked last month for a recommendation to the Coordinating Committee to adopt the new mapping as an official amendment to the existing Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. At that meeting, Mr. Krall had requested more time to review the mapping. Mr. Krall stated that he did review the mapping. He said, for the record, the City of Reading currently has no official plan to make the recommended bicycle/pedestrian lane additions in the immediate future. The City would love to see it happen, but these are long-range ideas for future bicycle and pedestrian movement. Mr. Golembiewski stated just because they may be shown as a formal bicycle or pedestrian lane in a particular location, the text describes that, should a particular recommendation not work out at a particular location, alternatives would be supported by the plan.

MOTION: Mr. Piper made a motion to recommend these draft map updates to the Coordinating Committee for their approval as an amendment to the current Bicycle and Pedestrian Transportation Plan. Mr. Krall seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

9. PENNDOT UPDATES ON BRIDGE PROJECTS

Acting Chairman Vottero gave an update on Bridge projects.

Mr. Piper said that there have been many discussions over the years trying to move these projects forward. We made good strides in advancing a lot of these projects. He is looking forward for the next few years when all of these projects start hitting the street.

10. COMMUTER SERVICES UPDATE

Mr. Boyer stated that Ms. Michelle Schribbick is the new outreach person for Berks County. BCTV and the Berks County Community Foundation joined the program. There were meetings and events held with other businesses including EDSI Berks, Alvernia University, BCIU, East Penn/DEKA, Double Tree, First Energy, and the YMCA. Ms. Schribbick also attended the Berks Latino Work Force Development Job Fair. This fair helped the Latino community find people seeking work and workplace opportunities, especially where there are transportation barriers involved.

Mr. Boyer stated that 56 new people joined the Commute PA Program in January. That is the data base where people can log in, create a profile, track their green trips, and get rewards. He stated that there were 4,900 trips tracked in the system in January, which equates to approximately 130,000 miles not driven and \$76,000 saved.

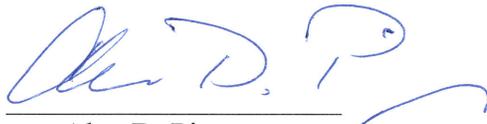
11. OTHER BUSINESS

- Mr. Piper stated that a revised membership listing has been put in the packets. Mr. Zeiber, from the City of Reading, was added. Ms. Heshmat was missed, so she will be added, as well.
- There were several new members added to the Coordinating Committee. We are still waiting to hear from the Reading Regional Airport Authority regarding representatives to both the Coordinating Committee and the Technical Committee.

12. ADJOURNMENT

MOTION: Mr. Golembiewski made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Mr. Krall seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 2:18 PM.

Date: 3/17/22



Alan D. Piper