

SPC Transportation Operations & Safety Committee Regional Operations Plan (ROP) Update Kick-off

Tuesday, November 19, 2013, 10:00AM
SPC Conference Center, Chatham II, Pittsburgh

ATTENDEES

Greg Barlow, CMU	Eric Bell, PennDOT District 12-0
Ross Buchan, Gannett Fleming	Anthony Castellone, Pennoni Associates
Frank Cippel, PennDOT District 11-0	Domenic D'Andrea, SPC
Robb Dean, PennDOT District 12-0	Chuck DiPietro, SPC
Bob Dudash, ACTA	Max Heckman, Michael Baker
Tom Klevan, SPC	Todd Kravits, PennDOT District 11-0
Brian Krul, Transsystems	Steven Levine, Kimley-Horn
Melissa McFeaters, PennDOT District 10-0	Duane McKee, Cranberry Township
Richard Meritzer, City of Pittsburgh	Aleksandar Mitrovic, Kimley-Horn
Ann Ogoreuc, Allegheny County	Amanda Purcell, City of Pittsburgh
Kelly Rigot, URS	Donald Shanis, Pennoni Associates
Allie Slizofski, Drive Engineering	Doug Smith, SPC
Jesse Smith, Drive Engineering	Kathy Stefani, SPC
Bob Taylor, Gannett Fleming	Scott Thompson-Graves, WR&A
Dave Tomaswick, PennDOT District 10-0	Mario Toscano, Drive Engineering
Rex Woodward, Port of Pittsburgh	

MEETING SUMMARY

- Doug Smith welcomed meeting attendees and initiated a round of introductions. Following introductions, Doug provided an update on the regional Traffic Incident Management (TIM) program. Recent activities have included establishment of a Sharepoint site for regional stakeholders, a training workshop on responding to incidents involving tanker trucks, and hosting FHWA's SHRPII TIM train-the-trainer course. The Regional TIM Steering Committee and both existing Local TIM Teams met recently. SPC is also participating in a statewide TAC study on TIM best practices. Additional guidance and program framework at the state level could be a big benefit in helping to advance regional and local efforts.
- Domenic D'Andrea provided an update on the Regional Traffic Signal Program. The first cycle of the program is complete and resulted in a benefit-cost ratio of 90:1. Design is complete for second cycle projects in District 10 & 12 and these projects will be let in the next month or two. Second cycle projects in District 11 are currently in final design and will be let in the spring. Applications have been received for 3rd cycle projects and these projects are currently being reviewed. The total amount requested for the 3rd cycle was \$6.6 million (and municipal estimates tend to run low). SPC has secured \$4 million in CMAQ funds for this cycle. A technical review of scope and cost for each of these projects will be undertaken as the next step. SPC will be putting out an RFQ before the end of the calendar year for consultant design services for the 3rd cycle. Domenic also mentioned a \$100,000 Automated Red Light Enforcement (ARLE) funded project that SPC is overseeing to replace incandescent signal bulbs with LED. These funds will be focused on financially distressed communities in the region.

- Domenic also provided an overview/history of the development of Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) in Southwestern PA. He discussed emerging areas in ITS and the need to discuss these technologies as part of the Regional Operations Plan (ROP) update. The ITS Architecture has not been updated since it was adopted in 2004. Todd Kravits mentioned the Eastern Corridor transportation study that PennDOT currently has underway. This will also be an important study for identifying ITS needs and opportunities in this important regional corridor.
- Steven Levine and Aleksandar Mitrovic provided a presentation on the City of Philadelphia's efforts to upgrade their traffic signal systems. Key elements of this project include upgrading from electro-mechanical to solid-state (170) controllers, integration of Ethernet IP fiber communications, and establishment of a traffic operations center. The traffic management system being implemented will provide engineers with performance metrics, visualization tools, mobile apps, and other capabilities that will help them manage the signals more effectively in order to reduce congestion and enhance safety. Philadelphia's signal upgrades are primarily being funded through ARLE funds.
- Doug Smith led discussion on the Regional Operations Plan (ROP) update, providing an overview of the history and development of the ROP, highlights of the progress that has been made on implementation, notes on state and federal policy changes over the past few years, and an outline of the process and new direction being considered for the current ROP update. Highlights of the discussion that followed include:
 - Incident & Emergency Management focus area should be renamed Traffic Incident Management (TIM).
 - Traveler Information could probably be dropped as a stand-alone focus area.
 - The new proposed approach includes dividing the region up into subareas (akin to transportation "watersheds") and taking a targeted look at each of the ROP focus areas within each subarea. This could fit well with PennDOT's Corridor Modernization effort and would focus on "Tier 2" roadways, which are typically National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) network roads below the level of Interstates.
 - As part of the ROP update, SPC would like to develop a process similar to Road Safety Audits but focused on both Operations & Safety (i.e. Operations & Safety Assessments) that could be taken out to each of these subareas over the next few years. This process would engage local stakeholders, similar to the RSAs, and identify operational and safety improvements focused on the Tier 2 network.
 - One of the tasks of the ROP update would be to develop prompt lists, which are lists of items to address when conducting these assessments. Consideration of municipal plans would also be integrated into the process.
 - Richard Meritzer stated that pedestrians and the disability community are afraid to go to certain locations due to traffic and unfavorable conditions and wondered if this "intimidation factor" could be considered. Doug mentioned that this could be something included in the Intermodal Connectivity prompt list that is developed.
 - Robb Dean raised the issue that many long regional corridors, like U.S. 119, change significantly over their length and that these corridors may need to be divided up into segments based on their context.
 - Posted and closed bridges will need to be a consideration in the process (freight prompt list) because traffic operations are impacted by detours. Considering this in a planning context like the ROP could help Districts and municipalities be proactive about bridge postings.

- Consensus was that ITS is better integrated into all focus areas (the way it is in the current ROP) rather than made a stand-alone focus area. Also, it was agreed that the focus areas are intended to be multimodal in nature and that pedestrian mobility should not be considered a separate focus area. There will be a separate bicycle and pedestrian component to the Long Range Transportation Plan. The Intermodal Connectivity focus area of the ROP provides a way to identify operational issues related to places where modes come together.
 - Winter Services and Work Zones are areas not currently covered by the ROP that should be considered.
- The next Ops and Safety Committee meeting is tentatively scheduled for February 25th and is being considered for a half-day workshop format with a focus on establishing regional subareas and starting develop the ROP prompt lists. SPC will work to get participation from PennDOT Central Office, the PA Turnpike Commission, regional transit authorities, and others who do not typically attend the Ops and Safety Committee meetings.
- ROP development will be taking place over the next 6-9 months with a draft report targeted for Summer 2014. The goal is to then finalize the ROP in Fall 2014 and begin rolling out the Operations & Safety Assessments in 2015. Richard suggested additional briefings to non-traditional communities. Allie Slizofski suggested reaching out through professional organizations to get others involved. Additional mechanisms for outreach could include Survey Monkey, a ROP SharePoint site, Mindmixer, and electronic voting devices at meetings.