

Meeting Minutes for December 10th 2009
Transportation Technical Committee Meeting
Regional Enterprise Tower - Pittsburgh, PA

Attendees:

- Lynn Heckman, Allegheny County Economic Development
Steve Shanley, Allegheny County Department of Public Works
- Darin Alviano, Armstrong County Planning Commission
- James Camp, Beaver County Department of Public Works
- David Johnston, Butler County Planning Commission
- Arthur Cappella, Fayette County Planning Commission
- Kevin Gray, Greene County Planning Commission
- Amy McKinney, Lawrence County Planning Commission
- Jeffrey Leithauser, Washington County Planning Commission
- John Surmacz, Westmoreland County Planning Department
Bill Piper, Westmoreland County Consultant
Chris Bova, Westmoreland County Planning Department
- Patrick Hassett, Pittsburgh Department of Public Works
- Kevin McCullough, PennDOT Central Office
Dave Cook, PennDOT District 10-0
Doug Dupnock, PennDOT District 10-0
Dan Cessna, PennDOT District 11-0
Cheryl Moon Sirianni, PennDOT District 11-0
Rob Miskanic, PennDOT District 11-0
Alan Bailey, PennDOT District 12-0
Stacey Rabatin, PennDOT District 12-0
Adam Smith, PennDOT District 12-0
Angela Saunders, PennDOT District 12-0
Lynn Manion, Airport Corridor Transportation Management Association
Matt Santoni, Tribune Review
Chuck DiPietro, SPC Staff
Chuck Imbrogno, SPC Staff
Karen Franks, SPC Staff
Matt Pavlosky, SPC Staff
Ryan Gordon, SPC Staff
- (Indicates Voting Member)

1. November 19, 2009 TTC Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)

Chuck DiPietro called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Chuck asked everyone to introduce themselves. Alan Bailey noted some personnel reassignments within District 12-0 for the TTC's information. The November 19th, 2009 meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. FHWA/PENNDOT Central Office Reports

a.) FHWA PA Division Office Organizational Change (Attachment B)

Matt Smoker from FHWA was not in attendance, so Chuck DiPietro referred everyone to Attachment B which detailed the organizational changes underway at the FHWA Pennsylvania Division Office. Chuck noted that the upcoming personnel reorganization at the Pennsylvania Division of FHWA focused on better integration of the planning and environmental personnel.

b.) Linking Planning and NEPA Update

Chuck briefly discussed the activities of the ongoing PennDOT Linking Planning and NEPA statewide initiative. Chuck stated that a meeting was held on December 3rd in State College with staff from seven other MPO/RPOs. The meeting involved Secretary Biehler and his senior Central Office staff. The session was a follow-up to the feedback received at the PennDOT Planning Partner Meetings in October. Chuck feels the meeting was productive and positive on several issues involved with the initiative and will help PennDOT in preparing for a scheduled December 17th summit in Harrisburg of all of the state's MPO/RPOs on the Linking Planning and NEPA initiatives. The meeting will continue to deliberate the process, resources, and agency relationships involved in implementing the new project development process and linking planning and NEPA.

c.) Update on SAFETEA-LU extension.

Kevin McCullough stated that the status of SAFETEA-LU is the same as was reported by Matt Smoker during last month's TTC meeting. We are currently under a continuing resolution, which will extend SAFETEA-LU funding at 2009 levels until mid-December.

This is the second continuing resolution to extend SAFETEA-LU at 2009 levels. Kevin stated it is unknown at this time if another continuing resolution or an appropriations bill will extend SAFETEA-LU.

d.) I-80 Tolling

Kevin stated that there is no response on the Turnpike's application to U.S. DOT to toll I-80. At this time, the Districts and MPOs are moving ahead with their work on TIP update under the current fiscal guidance that does not include any revenue from the tolling of I-80.

4. Action on Amendments and Modifications to the 2009 to 2012 TIP

The current administrative action and amendment procedures are attached following these meeting minutes.

a.) PennDOT District 10-0 (**Attachment C**)

Dave Cook of PennDOT District 10-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 10-0 had no amendment requests this month. Dave summarized one of the administrative actions:

The West Kittanning Intersection project - currently funded for construction in FFYs 2010 and 2011 is scheduled for a late CY 2010 let. The project design has consumed more time than originally anticipated. Therefore, the project's timeframe is such that the FFY 2010 construction funds will not be utilized. Dave explained that the funds would be transferred to the PA 228/PA 308 Knox Intersection safety project in Clarion County of the Northwest region and is scheduled for a June 2010 let. The West Kittanning Intersection will, subsequently, be fully funded for construction in the 2011-2014 TIP, with a let date of early 2011.

Darin Alviano stated that the West Kittanning Intersection is an important priority for Armstrong County. He continued saying Armstrong County does not have a problem with the transfer to the northwest region as long as the District commits to an early 2011 let date for the West Kittanning Intersection project. Dave Cook explained that the project was originally programmed for a June letting, which would mean that the bulk of the work was to have been done in the 2011 construction season, so letting in early 2011 is not that significant of a change in schedule.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 10-0 administrative

(Attachment A)

action requests to the TIP (over \$1 million administrative actions require TTC approval).

b.) PennDOT District 11-0 (**Attachment D, Handout 1, and District Handout**)

Rob Miskanic of PennDOT District 11-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 11-0 had one amendment request:

- Butler Street Bridge – Adding the final design phase to the current TIP at a cost of \$120,000.

Rob Miskanic reviewed several of the administrative actions:

- Mansfield Bridge – adding an additional \$1.5 million to the project from the Allegheny County Local Bridge Preservation Line Item.
- West Liberty Avenue – Adding \$60,000 for additional PE work.

Chuck DiPietro directed attention at two interesting feasibility studies contained in the District 11-0 administrative action narratives; one for the West End Bridge Interchange and one for the Parkway West Study. Dan Cessna commented that the West End Bridge Interchange Feasibility Study was court ordered in association with the North Shore casino and that the Parkway West will utilize an earmark to study low-cost measures to improve the safety and operation of the Parkway West.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 11-0 amendment and administrative action requests to the TIP.

c.) PennDOT District 12-0 (**Attachment E and Handout 1**)

Adam Smith of PennDOT District 12-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 12-0 had one amendment request this month. Adam reviewed the amendment request:

- SR 119 Everson to Westmoreland County Line – adding \$1.5 of ARRA funds to the construction phase of the project for preservation work on three structures within the limits.

John Surmacz stated that Westmoreland County is opposed to the administrative action proposed by District 12-0 related to the Waltz Mill Bridge. John elaborated that the

(Attachment A)

administrative action regarding Waltz Mill Bridge would take \$453,000 out of the Westmoreland Local Bridge line item, which Westmoreland County is opposed to because they have other priority local bridge needs. John then made a motion that the TTC approve the District 12-0 amendments and administrative actions with the exception of the Waltz Mill Bridge action and that the funds from the Westmoreland County Local Bridge Line Item be moved into the Baldrige Bridge Project preliminary engineering phase. The motion was followed by discussion between Westmoreland County and PennDOT District 12-0 on several aspects of the Baldrige Bridge Project including the bridge bill status, state funding eligibility, the ready-to-go status, the schedule, and local match funding. Bill Piper stated that in a worst case-scenario, if necessary, Westmoreland County could provide the 20 percent match on the project.

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the motion proposed by Westmoreland County so the TTC was clear on what was being proposed. Armstrong County seconded the motion by Westmoreland County. The TTC then voted and approved the motion by Westmoreland County to approve the District 12-0 amendments and administrative actions with the exception of the Waltz Mill Bridge action and move funds from the Westmoreland County Local Bridge Line Item instead into the Baldrige Bridge Project preliminary engineering phase. Chuck DiPietro noted that the details of the Baldrige Bridge Project funding and schedule will be revisited at the next District 12-0 TIP update work session on December 15th. Kevin McCullough noted that the addition of the Baldrige Bridge Project is a TIP amendment.

5. Advance 2011-2014 TIP Update

a.) STC Public Hearing for SPC Region

Cheryl Moon Sirianni noted that some of the projects presented are not consistent with PennDOT's overall philosophy. Kevin noted feedback he was hearing was positive and that compared to some of the other STC hearings in other parts of the state, this hearing was more traditional with a lot of project-specific testimony. A list of names of the individuals that testified was distributed to the TTC at the November meeting.

b.) Recap of third Round of TIP Update Work Sessions

Chuck DiPietro provided a brief review of the third round of TIP work sessions noting that there was a lot of individual outreach on the part of the Districts to the SPC member planning departments. There has been excellent participation in the process by PennDOT, the county planning departments, and some PPP chairs. Chuck asked each District to briefly comment on the status of the TIP development to date:

District 10-0: Dave Cook summarized the TIP as a carry-over TIP that they could not carry everything they wanted due to funding constraints that at this point has

resulted in some project and phase deferrals.

District 11-0: There is a working version that at this time is balanced, but very lean and requires some additional fine tuning. Cheryl Moon Sirianni stated that the partners in the process have been very informed and very prepared which has helped the development and cooperation. Dan Cessna stated that it has been a good TIP update thus far in District 11-0.

District 12-0: Chuck DiPietro stated that the third TIP work Session will be held on Tuesday December 15th at the District Office. A particular challenge right now with the District 12-0 portion of the TIP is the closure on the local projects and line items particularly in Westmoreland County. Chuck stated that high level District 12/Westmoreland County meetings have been scheduled and conversations are continuing to work to close on this portion of the TIP update.

Chuck DiPietro reiterated the deadline to submit a preliminary draft 2011 TIP to Central Office is December 31.

c.) Fourth Round of TIP Update Work Sessions

Chuck reviewed the schedule for the fourth round of TIP work sessions.

- PennDOT District 10-0 - Wednesday, February 24th at 10:00 AM in Indiana
- PennDOT District 11-0 – Tuesday, February 16th at 2:00 PM at District 11-0 in Bridgeville
- PennDOT District 12-0 - The fourth round work session has not yet been scheduled

Chuck reviewed the remaining schedule for the third round of TIP work sessions.

- PennDOT District 12-0 – December 15th 9:30 at the District 12-0 Office

d.) Spike Candidates Update (**Attachment F and Handout 3**)

Chuck DiPietro briefly highlighted the Spike Discretionary Program. Chuck suggested we should utilize the three District Executives and Kevin McCullough as our messengers regarding strong regional candidates for spike funding. Chuck referred to Handout 3; as a preliminary list of spike candidates that is emerging from discussion at each district work session. The list itself has no status with Central Office, but should help their

statewide screening of spike candidates.

Kevin McCullough stated that Central Office will be reviewing projects that have received spike funds in the past, but there is no guarantee that these projects will receive spike funding this round. Kevin believes that the focus of the spike funds, as it was last TIP update, will be bridges, although highway projects will also be considered. Kevin stated that there will be a series of meetings discussing Spike funding at Central Office in January and he expects Spike announcements to be made in February.

Lynn Heckman noted that Allegheny County has right-sized its request and is removing one of the Carrie furnace projects from the list.

e.) Public Involvement/PPP activities

Matt Pavlosky reviewed the PPP participation in the TIP update. Matt stated that he really appreciates the involvement of the individual PennDOT Districts and the SPC member planning departments in the PPP sessions to date. Matt stated that there will be PPP meetings on the TIP update upcoming in Allegheny County, Butler County, and Fayette County. Dave Johnston noted that it has been a while since the Butler County PPP has been assembled and they are hoping to use the PPP as their census complete count committee. Matt could possibly provide an update at the time this committee is assembled to review the census responsibilities.

f.) CMAQ Status Report (**Handout 4**)

Chuck DiPietro thanked the TTC members in attendance that also served on the CMAQ Evaluation Committee. Chuck requested the TTC's input on the CMAQ Evaluation Committee recommendations for Monday's upcoming meeting with SPC's Executive Committee (December 14th).

Chuck Imbrogno reviewed the status of the draft CMAQ program development. The deadline to submit applications for new candidate projects for CMAQ funds was October 5th. SPC received 53 applications for new candidate projects (\$131.9 million). There is \$25 million in CMAQ funds available per year on the 2011 TIP and there are a significant number of carryover projects. There have been five meetings of the CMAQ evaluation committee with the final meeting being held on December 7th. At this final meeting, the CMAQ Evaluation Committee reviewed the results of the technical evaluation and conducted keypad voting to keep or reject each project listed in order to finalize its recommended CMAQ program for 2011-2014 TIP. The CMAQ evaluation Committee is advisory only and decision-making power is with the SPC Commission. Chuck Imbrogno reviewed Handout 4, which was a detailed table illustrating a summary

of the new CMAQ projects by composite score rankings of the new projects and identified the projects that, after keypad voting, were recommended by the CMAQ Evaluation Committee to be dropped. Chuck stated that the carryover project amount has been difficult to estimate, but it is currently in the range of \$50 to \$67 million. After the carryover projects have been accounted for, the new candidate priority ranking list will be utilized to select projects with remaining CMAQ funds (currently it is estimated that there will be between \$35 and \$55 million available for new CMAQ projects). Chuck noted the addition of a new column, the cumulative total CMAQ request, had been added for the TTC meeting. This column can be used to estimate the cut-off point between funded and unfunded new CMAQ projects.

Kevin McCullough cautioned everyone that there are still 9 months of the current TIP remaining and that the line between funded and unfunded new CMAQ projects will continue to fluctuate based on what occurs with the existing CMAQ projects in the current TIP (e.g. carryover projects). Kevin McCullough stated that the process for selecting CMAQ projects and managing the CMAQ program are much improved. Kevin stated that the region's new CMAQ Program Management Committee will be looking closely at the projects for 2011 and 2012 and will be proactive in advancing them to 2010 if possible. Kevin stated that hopefully the CMAQ management process will improve the information and tracking on some of the nontraditional CMAQ projects that have been a problem in the past. Lynn Heckman concurred that the CMAQ evaluation process is much improved and stated that if project sponsors do not deliver on projects it should be factored into future project selection evaluation. Pat Hassett asked if it was premature to report to the SPC Executive Committee if we are not sure of the projects that will actually receive funding, Pat suggested a focus on the list and rankings when presenting to the Executive Committee. Cheryl Moon Sirianni noted that there are potential problems with projects coming in with costs way higher than currently estimated. Chuck Imbrogno acknowledged that this is a concern with both carry-over projects and the new projects.

David Johnston commented that the CMAQ evaluation process has been refined and improved; however the Evaluation Committee conducting key pad voting at the end of the process has undermined the prior and strong technical evaluation process that was conducted. David cited the example of the New Transit Service from Butler to Pittsburgh Project, which was the 11th ranked project, but was eliminated in the final yes/no vote of the Evaluation Committee. David asked why so much effort was put into the technical analysis, when it can be undermined at the end of the process. David noted that this is the top transit priority in PennDOT District 10-0. Chuck DiPietro noted that this particular project was the only candidate voted on twice due to a tie in the first vote.

Darin Alviano made a motion to put the New Transit Service Butler to Pittsburgh Project back into the prioritized list for consideration. Jim Camp seconded the motion adding that due to its relatively low-cost and high ranking of this project he thinks it should still

(Attachment A)

be considered. Jeff Leithauser stated he thinks it is a good project, but questioned if this is the type of project that we want to utilize CMAQ funds. Chuck Imbrogno stated that the project is eligible for CMAQ since it implements new transit service. He added that CMAQ funding can only be used for three years for transit operations projects. For the project to continue beyond three years, another funding source would need to be identified. At that time the project would have to be reevaluated.

The TTC voted unanimously to add the New Transit Service from Butler to Pittsburgh Project back into the prioritized list for consideration for CMAQ funding.

Cheryl Moon Sirianni noted that there is a need to evaluate projects post-construction to see if they are achieving air quality and congestion benefits they claimed would occur. Cheryl stated that this should be the focus of the third phase of the improved CMAQ process, to see if we got anticipated benefits in results with the CMAQ funds spent. Chuck DiPietro noted that at some point a debriefing session will be held to review the entire CMAQ process that took place for the 2011 TIP update. When asked by Chuck DiPietro, the TTC indicated interest in participating in a March CMAQ process debriefing for this TIP update cycle with the CMAQ Evaluation Committee and the TOC.

6. Other Business

a.) December 16th Transit Operators Committee

Chuck DiPietro noted the TOC will meet on December 16th at 10 AM at the Regional Enterprise Tower 23rd floor.

b.) December 9th PA Transportation Air Quality Work Group

It was noted that Chuck Imbrogno attended the PA Transportation Air Quality Work Group and discussed the SPC CMAQ evaluation process.

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for Monday, December 14th and then Monday, January 25th with the next TTC meeting scheduled for Thursday, January 14th.

Attachment: Current TTC administrative action and amendment procedures

For general information purposes, SPC is using the following administrative action and amendment procedures:

Administrative Actions

To be considered as an administrative action a proposed change must meet the following criteria:

- Exempt from air quality testing
- Does not add or delete an existing project
- No significant change in project scope or design concept
- Maintains overall and year-to-year fiscal balance

Administrative actions may include any of the following types of changes:

- Adds a project for emergency relief purposes except those involving substantial, functional, location, or capacity changes
- Correction of a misprint or data entry error
- Addition or correction of local match funds
- Schedule change, for projects or phases in any of the first three years of the TIP
- Incidental ROW changes
- Change in the funding source
- Exempt projects

New or Deleted Phase

The technical committee can approve an administrative action to add a new phase or delete a phase if the phase cost is \$5 million or less for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project.

Line Items

The recognition/programming on the TIP of specific projects within an approved line item (i.e., betterments, rail-highway crossings, Transit Section 5310 Program, transportation enhancements, local bridges, etc.) is an administrative action as long as the line item is reduced by the same amount as the eligible project. Line item-based actions require technical committee

approval.

For a betterment line item or a rail-highway crossing line item there are no restrictions based on project cost; identification of projects of any amount can be considered as an administrative action. It is also permitted as an administrative action to remove funding from a “line item” project (betterment or rail-highway only) as long as the funds are returned to the respective line item.

Cost Changes

Changes in the cost of a project or project phase can be handled as an administrative action if the cost change is \$5 million or less. A project sponsor is permitted to make an administrative cost change \$1 million or less by reporting the change to the technical committee for informational purposes only. The technical committee must approve a cost change greater than \$1 million but less than \$5 million for a highway project. The action becomes effective when it is forwarded by the technical committee to PennDOT and FHWA or FTA.

Administrative actions do not require Federal approval but FHWA and FTA reserve the right to disallow an administrative action if it is not consistent with federal regulations or the MOU. The project sponsor must provide full documentation prior to SPC acceptance of the requested change and reflecting it on the TIP. SPC and PennDOT will work cooperatively to address and respond to any FHWA and/or FTA comments on these actions.

TIP Amendments

Any project change that cannot be processed within the rules governing administrative actions must be handled as a TIP amendment. A proposed change must be considered as a TIP amendment if it meets any of the following criteria:

- Affects air quality conformity (regardless of funding source)
- Adds or deletes a project (regardless of project cost, except for existing approved line item changes that are considered administrative actions)
- Adds a new project phase or deletes a phase that exceeds \$5 million for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project
- Creates a new line item
- Involves a major change in the project scope of work or design concept
- Changes the project selection status

New or Deleted Project

The technical committee can approve an amendment to add a new project or delete an existing project if the total cost change is \$10 million or less. Total cost changes that exceed \$10 million for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project require approval by the Commission.

Cost Changes

For changes in the cost of an already approved project or project phase, the dollar level of the change will determine the procedures that are required for approval. Changes of \$5 million or less are administrative actions. Changes that exceed \$5 million are amendments. Cost changes of \$10 million or less can be approved by the technical committee. Changes that exceed \$10 million require approval by the Commission.

Air Quality

Amendments with an air quality impact require air quality testing and a 30-day public comment period including a public meeting before they can be presented to the Commission.

Major Fiscal Impact

Amendments with a fiscal impact that exceeds \$10 million are subject to a 30-day public comment period before they can be presented to the Commission.