

Meeting Minutes for October 15th 2009

Transportation Technical Committee Meeting
Regional Enterprise Tower - Pittsburgh, PA

Attendees:

- Steve Shanley, Allegheny County Department of Public Works
- Darin Alviano, Armstrong County Planning Commission
- James Camp, Beaver County Department of Public Works
Tammy Frank, Beaver County
- Joel MacKay, Butler County Planning Commission
- Kevin Gray, Greene County Planning Commission
- Jeff Raykes, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
- Doniele Andrus, Lawrence County / Beaver County
- Jeffrey Leithauser, Washington County Planning Commission
- John Surmacz, Westmoreland County
Chris Bova, Westmoreland County Planning Department
Bill Piper, Westmoreland County Consultant
- Patrick Hassett, Pittsburgh Department of Public Works
Patrick Roberts, Pittsburgh Department of Planning
- Kevin McCullough, PennDOT Central Office
Matt Smoker, FHWA
Dave Cook, PennDOT District 10-0
Dan Cessna, PennDOT District 11-0
Robert Miskanic, PennDOT District 11-0
Stacey Rabatin, PennDOT District 12-0
Adam Smith, PennDOT District 12-0
J.D. Fogarty, Port of Pittsburgh
Lucinda Beattie, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership
Lynn Manion, Airport Corridor Transportation Management Area
Mavis Rainey, Oakland Transportation Management Area
Chuck DiPietro, SPC Staff
Chuck Imbrogno, SPC Staff
Karen Franks, SPC Staff
Matt Pavlosky, SPC Staff
Ryan Gordon, SPC Staff
Matt Santoni, Tribune Review
- (Indicates Voting Member)

1. September 17, 2009 TTC Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)

Chuck DiPietro called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Chuck asked everyone to introduce themselves. The August 25th 2009 meeting minutes were approved with one word change by Matt Smoker. Chuck DiPietro noted the procedure to distribute the preliminary TTC meeting agenda package electronically to all TTC members and asked if there were any problems associated with continuing this as standard practice. There were no objections from the TTC to the electronic distribution of the preliminary agenda package.

2. Public Comment

There were no public comments.

3. FHWA/PENNDOT Central Office Reports

a.) Status of SAFETEA-LU Extension

Matt Smoker discussed the current 31-day SAFETEA-LU continuing resolution, which will extend the SAFETEA-LU funding at 2009 levels until the end of October. At the end of the month, another continuing resolution is expected to further extend SAFETEA-LU. The duration of the expected resolution could range anywhere from three to eighteen months. Kevin McCullough noted that as a result recessions of \$8.7 billion nationwide went into effect. Kevin stated that this may become a concern if continuing resolutions continue, which would further reduce funding amounts. Kevin stated there are three possible scenarios: 1) another continuing resolution; 2) An appropriations bill with new funding levels and no recessions; and 3) a new transportation authorization act.

b.) ARRA Savings Since Round 2

Kevin McCullough stated that PennDOT continues to see good bids on the ARRA funded work allowing the reprogramming of the low-bid savings into other projects on the TIP. There are a lot of procedural steps to adding new projects to the ARRA list such as “ready to go” status checks, Governor Certification, and FHWA Certification. Kevin stated that PennDOT will continue to reprogram these ARRA fund savings and it will show up in future District administrative actions. Kevin noted that in some cases ARRA funds can reallocate other more flexible federal funds to other projects. Kevin McCullough stated that all the Districts are working to identify potential projects to utilize ARRA fund savings.

Dave Cook asked what will be done with the ARRA funds that were obligated, but not spent. Dan Cessna stated that with good accounting of these savings that these unspent funds could be used on other split funded projects. With this approach there will be no

leftover ARRA funds.

c.) Draft Interstate TIP Program of Projects

Kevin McCullough stated that the statewide Interstate maintenance TIP program of projects is organized and managed out of Central Office. The goal is to assemble the Interstate TIP list of projects in advance of the non-interstate preliminary draft TIPs from the MPOs/RPOs. Dan Cessna stated that it is the third TIP cycle that the Interstate TIP is being assembled out of Central Office and he believes it has worked well for the region. Kevin noted that the region's share of the statewide Interstate program has been good because of our extensive needs and the ability of this region to deliver Interstate projects, evidenced by the amount of interstate construction going on around the region. However, Kevin elaborated that there are challenges with interstate maintenance in southeastern PA on I-95 that may influence the amount of Interstate maintenance funding to the region in the future. Chuck DiPietro stated that as soon as SPC receives the statewide Interstate maintenance program of projects it will be distributed to the TTC.

d.) Updated PA Byways Program Website (**Attachment B**)

Chuck DiPietro reviewed Attachment B, which contained information on the updated PA Byways Program website. The updated items on the website include: nomination guidelines, corridor management plans, byways maps, grant award history, contact information, and resources on project funding. Chuck noted that the updated site should prove helpful with tracking byway grant awards.

e.) Capital Budget/Bridge Bill Call for Candidates

Kevin McCullough reviewed the concept of Capital Budget Approval and Bridge Bill Approval. In Pennsylvania, any expenditure of state funds greater than \$300,000 requires capital budget approval. The approval allows PennDOT to spend funds on specified projects. Kevin noted that some projects that get capital budget approval never spend any funds, so this approval does not necessarily mean funds will be expended. Kevin noted that there is a deadline of tomorrow (October 16) for Central Office to provide the legislature a list of projects that require these legislative approvals. Kevin added that any bridges that PennDOT is targeting for work in the near future are typically reviewed and included (if they do not already have these approvals) when this list is submitted.

Bill Piper stated that the lack of capital budget approval or bridge bill approval can be an issue on line items for local projects because the counties don't know if a project has capital budget authority. Bill Piper noted that the bridge bill approval for two bridges in Westmoreland County were recently in question and may need to be added to the request. Chuck DiPietro asked if Adam Smith could check on the capital budget status and bridge

bill status of the Baldrige Bridge and the Beatty Road Bridge in Westmoreland County.

f.) Other

Matt Smoker reviewed the status of the \$1.5 billion U.S. DOT discretionary funding source called TIGER grants. The grant program funds will be distributed at the discretion of the U.S. Secretary of Transportation and was established as part of the ARRA. The application deadline was mid-September and the U.S. DOT is currently processing and reviewing the applications received. Matt distributed a handout that provided a nationwide application overview. There were a total of 1,381 applications submitted at a cost of \$56.9 billion. There were 40 project applications submitted from Pennsylvania at a cost of over \$2 billion. Matt Smoker stated that the anticipated timeline calls for the announcement of the award winners in mid-February. Chuck DiPietro asked Matt if he had any advice on the project delivery process and preparation if any of these projects are selected for our region. Matt replied that the funds should go towards existing projects already in the pipeline because of the requirement for them to be completed within three years. The TIGER projects will be required follow the typical federal programming and project development process and all federal regulations will apply.

Chuck DiPietro reported that the greenhouse gas emissions are anticipated to be a component of the next transportation authorization act and are expected to include a significant role for MPOs, especially in the area of air quality conformity.

Chuck DiPietro explained that EPA had recently changed the daily air quality standard for PM 2.5. Chuck Imbrogno explained that EPA recently tightened the daily PM2.5 air quality standard. He explained that the new standard has resulted in three new nonattainment areas for daily PM 2.5 being designated in the SPC region. Chuck stated that the new nonattainment areas for the daily PM 2.5 standard are identical to existing nonattainment areas for the annual PM2.5 standard. Chuck Imbrogno stated that the new nonattainment areas will be announced in the Federal Register in the next couple of weeks. Designation of the new areas will be effective 30 days after publication of the Federal Register Notice. SPC will have to conduct a regional conformity assessment for the three new nonattainment areas and have US DOT concurrence within one year of the effective date. Based on that schedule, it appears that the conformity assessment for the new PM2.5 nonattainment areas can be done next spring as part of the conformity assessment for the new TIP.

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 (**Handout 1**)

Dave Cook of PennDOT District 10-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 10-0 had one amendment request this month.

- Seneca Valley Missing Ramps – Requesting the movement of a total of \$6,075,770 from several sources to fully fund construction of the project and consolidate construction funds in a three-year period. Dave described the details of a swap of \$5,468,745 between District 10-0 and 11-0 that made the amendment request possible.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 10-0 amendment request to the TIP.

b.) PennDOT District 11-0 (**Attachment C & Updated 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 no amendment requests. Rob reviewed one of the administrative actions:

- Emergency Work on Mansfield Bridge – Allegheny County Project required additional funds that came from the Levi Bird Duff Bridge project.

Chuck DiPietro stated that the information provided by District 11-0 was for informational purposes only and required no approval from the TTC.

c.) PennDOT District 12-0 (**Attachment D & Handout 2**)

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 requests and several administrative actions this month. Adam reviewed the amendment request:

- District 12-0 Small Bridge 1 and 2 – requesting that additional construction funds be added to the TIP for these projects. The source of the construction funds the Jeannette Area project. Adam noted that with this amendment request, PennDOT District 12-0 has committed to a December 2010 let date for the Jeannette Area project with Westmoreland County.

Bill Piper questioned what the limits of the Georges Station project were and for some clarification on the Route 30 restoration project. Adam Smith provided more detail on the Route 30 restoration project and noted that he will provide Adam with the limits of the Georges Station project.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 12-0 amendment request to the TIP.

5. Advance 2011-2014 TIP Update

a.) STC Public Hearing for SPC for SPC region

Matt Pavlosky briefly reviewed the date and procedures for the upcoming STC hearing on November 5th. SPC will open the hearing with a “State of the Region” presentation. SPC staff continues to work with PennDOT on the material for this presentation.

b.) Recap of First Round of TIP Update Work sessions

Karen Franks provided a brief review of the first round of TIP work sessions as follows:

District 10-0 Work Session 1 – A preliminary draft program was reviewed with just the list of carryover projects (no new Projects added) still around \$10 million over an overall balanced program. The next rounds of work sessions will work to move funds around by federal fiscal years and types of funds to bring the program closer to fiscal constraint.

District 11-0 Work Session 1 – The workgroup is still working to develop a preliminary draft program but initially it looks as though by just adding the carryover projects and no new projects, there will need to be at a minimum around \$25 million worth of projects cut (per year) to approach an overall balanced program. Individual partner discussions have/are being held to review the list of project priorities.

District 12-0 Work Session 1- The District presented a (balanced by year) preliminary draft program including only carryover projects (no new projects added), but also cutting/deferring a list of projects until the next TIP Update. Members of the work group will be working with the District to review and discuss a copy of the proposed list of cut carryover projects when it is soon distributed. The draft program does not include any locally sponsored bridge projects. Local projects that may need to be added to the list of projects include; the new Oak Forest project in Greene County, Act 26 Bridges (already started) in

Washington County, Slickville Road and the Beatty Road Bridge in Westmoreland County.

Overall Karen stated that she is encouraged with the progress to-date considering such a compressed schedule.

c.) Second Round of TIP Update Work Sessions Scheduled

PennDOT District 10-0 - Monday, November 16th 1:00 pm
at District office in Indiana.

PennDOT District 11-0 - Tuesday, November 17th 1:30 pm
at District office in Bridgeville.

PennDOT District 12-0 - Monday, November 16th 9:00 am
at the PennDOT Westmorland County Maintenance Building

d.) Public Involvement/PPPs

Matt Pavlosky reviewed the participation of the PPP chairs in that first round of TIP work sessions. Matt stated that SPC will hold an educational webinar on Monday November 9th at noon to provide a review of the “state of the region,” recap of the STC hearing, and provide information on the TIP process. Matt stated that the webinar will be archived on the SPC TIP webpage, which will also include the capability to accept e-mail questions. Matt elaborated that if the webinar is successful they may consider doing another later in the TIP update process. The new efforts on the webinars and website are an effort to provide greater levels of education to the PPPs and the public earlier in the TIP process.

Matt reviewed the dates of the PPP meetings that have been scheduled to date:

Greene County – Thursday Oct 22, 6pm-8pm, Stover Center, Waynesburg College, Rooms 301 & 302

Lawrence County - Friday, Nov 13, 12noon -2pm, Gallo’s Italian Villa, New Castle, PA

Washington County - Monday, Nov 16, 5pm-7pm, Washington County Courthouse

Westmoreland County - Tuesday Nov 17, 6-8pm, Westmoreland County Courthouse

Matt stated that he expects the other individual PPPs will schedule a meeting before the end of the year.

e.) CMAQ Status Report (**Handout 3**)

Chuck Imbrogno reviewed the status of the draft CMAQ program development. The deadline to submit applications for new CMAQ funded projects was October 5th and the first meeting of the CMAQ Evaluation Committee was held on October 9th. SPC received 53 applications for new candidate projects with a total request of over \$142 million. Chuck Imbrogno reviewed Handout 3, which contained a series of detailed tables illustrating the amount of CMAQ funds available in each year of the program (total \$102 million), a summary of the new projects by the four designated priority types, and detail about each of new and carryover projects. Dan Cessna asked how the priority types were determined. Chuck Imbrogno replied that the SPC Executive Committee established the priority project types. Chuck also noted that projects that are not one of the four priority types will be labeled “other” under priority type instead of “not identified”. Chuck Imbrogno reported that SPC staff has begun testing and scoring the new candidate projects, which will be followed by the ranking and prioritization of the new projects by the CMAQ Evaluation Committee.

Pat Hassett inquired about the total funds available and how much is claimed by the carryover projects. Chuck Imbrogno reviewed the last page of Handout 3, which detailed the carryover projects that currently total \$95 million out of a total available program amount of \$102 million. Lucinda Beattie stated that some of the carryover projects that have been in development for years should be reevaluated. Chuck Imbrogno elaborated that some of the carryover projects may be obligated in 2010 and the carryover projects must also undergo a cost update. In addition, several of the carryover projects may be removed from the TIP by the project sponsor. These factors will probably result in a reduction in the total CMAQ request from carryover projects. Dan Cessna expressed his skepticism that the CMAQ request amount of carryover projects would be significantly reduced through 2010 obligations. Dan also reminded the TTC of the repayment requirements of federal funds if the project is not going to be constructed. Kevin McCullough recommended that a conservative approach be applied to the carryover projects since the carryover projects represent a commitment that should be maintained. Kevin acknowledged there is no guarantee that the CMAQ program funding will be included in the next transportation authorization act, but the ranking of the new candidate projects is important if the CMAQ program continues because it will set the priority for the usage of any new CMAQ funds. Kevin concluded that the CMAQ program development is going to be a challenge. Jeff Leithauser commented that it might be better to debate the decisions on the carryover projects at the TTC. Chuck DiPietro responded that the CMAQ committee will continue to provide the factual information on

the carryover projects to the TTC as the process moves along. Chuck Imbrogno emphasized that the CMAQ evaluation committee will not score and rank carryover projects.

6. Other Business

a). Preliminary List of CMP Network Revisions for 2009-2012 Data Cycle (**Handout 4**)

Chuck DiPietro provided a review of the 2009 CMP network reassessment and presented the final changes in the 2009-2012 CMP network (Handout 4). The three-year CMP cycle has come to an end and the modifications of the network for the next CMP cycle will be implemented. There were no comments about the final changes to the CMP network. Chuck DiPietro added that the CMP is becoming increasingly important in both project development and evaluation. Chuck Imbrogno added that the CMP corridor status is one of the inputs in the CMAQ criteria scoring.

b). Freight Forum October 6th

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the proceedings of the recent SPC Freight Forum that included a presentation by the Army Corps of Engineers on traffic studies related to the locks and dams on the upper Ohio River navigation system.

c.) Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee, October 14th

Chuck DiPietro reported on the SPC Pedestrian Bicycle Committee that included a presentation by Lynn Manion of ACTA on pedestrian accessibility assessment in Robinson and North Fayette Township. In addition to this presentation, topics included a CMAQ status update, bicycle suitability mapping update, and a lengthy discussion of cyclist safety, cyclist behavior, and law enforcement.

d.) Transit Operators Committee

Chuck DiPietro noted that the TOC meeting scheduled for October 21st was cancelled. The next meeting of the TOC is scheduled for November 18th at 10:00 a.m.

e.) October 27th, Operations and Safety Committee

Chuck reviewed the agenda for the upcoming Operations and Safety Committee. The focus of this meeting will be on emerging traffic signal technologies. There will also be updates on the PennDOT/University of Pittsburgh Freeway Ramp Management Study

and on SPC's regional programs.

f.) October 29th, CMAQ Evaluation Committee Meeting Number 2

Chuck Imbrogno noted the date of the next CMAQ Evaluation Committee as October 29th at 10:00 a.m.

g.) Other

Bill Piper raised the issue of the Baldrige Bridge, which is a Westmoreland County-owned bridge that is the exact type that collapsed over I-70 some years back. Bill made the point that this bridge is in very poor condition and needs immediate attention for funds to start preliminary engineering. Bill requested federal funding in the amount of \$300,000 for preliminary engineering be put into the preliminary draft 2011 TIP. It was decided that further discussions on the preliminary engineering of the Baldrige Bridge project would be taken up at the next District 12-0 TIP work session on November 16th.

The next TTC is scheduled for Thursday November 19th at 10:00 AM.

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.