

## Meeting Minutes for September 17<sup>th</sup> 2009

Transportation Technical Committee Meeting  
Regional Enterprise Tower - Pittsburgh, PA

### Attendees:

- Lynn Heckman, Allegheny County Department of Economic Development
- Steve Shanley, Allegheny County Department of Public Works
- Darin Alviano, Armstrong County Planning Commission
- James Camp, Beaver County
- Joel MacKay, Butler County Planning Commission
- Arthur Cappella, Fayette County Planning Commission
- Sara Rosiek, Fayette County Planning Commission
- Kevin Gray, Greene County Planning Commission
- Jeff Raykes, Indiana County Office of Planning and Development
- Amy McKinney, Lawrence County Planning Commission
- Jeffrey Leithauser, Washington County Planning Commission
- Chris Bova, Westmoreland County Planning Department
- Bill Piper, Westmoreland County Consultant
- Patrick Hassett, Pittsburgh Department of Public Works
- Kevin McCullough, PennDOT Central Office
- Matt Smoker, FHWA
- Doug Dupnock, PennDOT District 10-0
- Dan Cessna, PennDOT District 11-0
- Cheryl Moon-Sirianni, PennDOT District 11-0
- Adam Smith, PennDOT District 12-0
- Angela Saunders, PennDOT District 12-0
- Lucinda Beattie, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership
- Lynn Mannion, ACTA
- Chuck DiPietro, SPC Staff
- Sara Walfoort, SPC Staff
- Dan Bernazzoli, SPC Staff
- Doug Smith, SPC Staff
- Domenic D'Andrea, SPC Staff
- Karen Franks, SPC Staff
- Matt Pavlosky, SPC Staff
- Ryan Gordon, SPC Staff
- (Indicates Voting Member)

**1. August 25<sup>th</sup>, 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 no revisions.

**2. Public Comment**

There were no public comments.

**3. FHWA/PENNDOT Central Office Reports**

Kevin McCullough from PennDOT Central Office gave a report on several Central Office activities.

- a.) STC Public Hearing – November 5<sup>th</sup> on 31<sup>st</sup> floor of the Regional Enterprise Tower

Kevin McCullough announced that the STC public hearing was rescheduled for November 5<sup>th</sup> on the 31<sup>st</sup> floor of the Regional Enterprise Tower. Kevin added that an agenda for the day's activities will be forthcoming shortly. Chuck DiPietro added that SPC will give an opening presentation on the "State of the Region." Chuck stated that the Districts are providing critical input in the development of the "State of the Region" presentation. Chuck emphasized that the presentation will focus on the extensive infrastructure capital maintenance continuing need and the fiscal realities that will make the TIP update difficult. Chuck stated that all the TTC participants need to take a realistic tone that conveys the fact that the TIP will be very tight considering the current backlog and the fiscal crisis when talking to those planning to present at the STC Public Hearing. Pat Hassett requested a copy of the Draft "State of the Region" presentation in advance of the STC hearing date in order to tailor the tone of the City's testimony so that it is consistent with the regional presentation. Chuck DiPietro stated that we would share the draft presentation slides with the TTC member planning departments and stated that we would like to expand the information about the local system needs into the presentation as well. Lynn Heckman suggested using some of the "Staggering Statistics" that were part of today's earlier presentation by Dan Cessna to NAIOP and to also add some local statistics.

b.) STC Public Hearing on 12-year Program Development Process Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI)

Kevin McCullough informed everyone that the Pennsylvania Community Transportation Initiative (PCTI) projects that were under review by the FHWA have been approved to be added to the TIP. The Federal Aid questions about the projects have been resolved, but there are still some remaining questions that FHWA has about the sponsors of these projects. Therefore, the projects are still not eligible for obligation due to these sponsor questions. Matt Smoker elaborated that the sponsors of these projects are being reviewed by FHWA to determine whether they have jurisdiction to administer federal transportation funds.

c.) PennDOT Draft Intercity Passenger & Freight Rail Plan: September 17<sup>th</sup> Public Meeting

Kevin McCullough stated that there is a PennDOT public meeting being held later today from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. in Carnegie on the Intercity Rail Plan. The meeting is one of a series of rail themed public meetings being held throughout the state to present the draft plan and discuss rail related issues.

d.) PennDOT Officially launches the 511 System

Kevin McCullough noted that the PennDOT 511 system was launched earlier in the month. 511PA provides free, 24-hour information services including traffic delay warnings, weather forecasts, regional tourism information, and links to transit agencies and major airports. The service is available by calling 511 from cellular phones and land lines or through the Internet at [www.511PA.com](http://www.511PA.com). Doug Smith added that SPC has provided PennDOT with regional information pertaining to the 511 system. Doug believes initially the information will be basic and consistent with the statewide system, but as it develops Doug expects to see customizations for this region which include additional transit information. Any comments about the 511 system can be directed to Doug because he has been working with the developers on this region's customized information.

e.) Other Items

Bill Piper asked Kevin McCullough if there was any progress in providing the District Offices with the top 25 accident locations in each county, as discussed at the previous TTC meeting. Kevin stated that it was his understanding that this

(Attachment A)

information would be released soon, but at this point the Districts have not yet received it. Bill Piper stated that Westmoreland County continues to be interested in this information as it may be helpful in the TIP update.

Matt Smoker from FHWA gave a report on several Federal activities.

Matt Smoker stated that a draft report from the U.S. DOT on the Certification Review of the Pittsburgh Metropolitan Planning Process is scheduled to be released in December.

Matt reported that U.S. House of Representatives and the Senate have approved a \$7 billion transfer from the General Fund to the Highway Trust Fund. The Highway Trust Fund was broke and if it did not receive this infusion of funds would have halted progress on all federally funded transportation projects in the nation. Matt reported that three Senate committees have approved the 18-month continuing resolution to extend SAFETEA-LU. Matt stated that the speculation exists that a new transportation bill could be passed anywhere between 18 months and four years from now. Matt stated that whenever the new transportation bill is passed, it is expected to include an increased focus on transparency and performance measures. Matt also stated that he expects liveability, sustainability, and climate change to be at the forefront of the authorization discussions. Matt referenced a GAO report on MPOs that was recently released and recommended more oversight and greater performance standards. Chuck DiPietro will distribute a link to the GAO study to all the TTC members.

Chuck DiPietro asked for an update on the end of September rescissions by FHWA. Matt Smoker responded that these rescissions are typical and are still anticipated. Matt elaborated that the rescissions are necessary to clean up unspent balances at the DOTs and they do not take away the authority to spend funds. Matt added that the rescissions result in reduced flexibility. Kevin McCullough stated that the balances in some of the formula funds builds up and needs to be cleaned up, but the rescissions do not have an impact on the programmed TIP project funds or earmarks.

**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 B**)

(Attachment A)

Doug Dupnock of PennDOT District 10-0 reviewed the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 10-0 had no amendment requests this month, but had several administrative actions of more than one million dollars.

Doug highlighted several of the administrative actions:

- Apollo Downtown Beautification – The Hometown Streets project located at the Apollo Plaza for pedestrian and ADA improvements. Request to use surplus construction funds from the Armstrong Trail Phase 2 to cover the low bid cost increase of the Apollo project.
- I-79/SR3025 Seneca Missing Ramps: Request to add \$1,892,727 in FFY 2009 and 2010 to the construction phase from the District 10 Highway Line Item.
- Flenniken Bridge – request to add the construction phase at \$2,000,000 to the current TIP from Act 44 Discretionary funds.

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

b.) PennDOT District 11-0 (**Attachment C & Updated Handout**)

Cheryl Moon-Sirianni of PennDOT District 11-0 reviewed the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 11-0 had no amendment requests.

Cheryl reviewed several of the administrative actions:

- Carnegie Deicing – adding the construction phase of this safety project to the current TIP. The project is the installation of a deicing system for the I-279 interchange in Carnegie Borough.
- Vanport Signals on SR 68 – the construction phase of this project is not ready to go at this time so the CMAQ funds were transferred to the SR 28 project.
- Reedsdale Pedestrian Bridge – add PE funds to the current TIP.

James Camp expressed his concern related to the movement of CMAQ funds for the Vanport project to 2011, particularly with the CMAQ Evaluation Committee taking a hard look at CMAQ rollover projects. Cheryl Moon Sirianni stated that the project encountered environmental clearance issues that caused a delay in the original schedule.

Kevin McCullough discussed the \$3.25 million dollar transfer of funds from the Governors Economic Development Fund to the Diesel Retrofit Switchyard Project. Kevin explained that the Governor's Office has approved the use of \$3.25 million in federal CMAQ funding for General Electric to provide additional diesel retrofit conversions for Norfolk Southern on switchyard locomotives in Allegheny County PA. This funding will supplement the CMAQ project that is already on the current TIP. These are additional funds to the region for an existing CMAQ project. This will have no impact on the other currently funded CMAQ projects. Sara Walfoort added that this technology has the opportunity to achieve even greater efficiencies and cost savings than

(Attachment A)

the current diesel retrofits. Kevin McCullough added that the representatives from GE seem very excited about this diesel engine technology and it will lead to jobs and economic benefits for Pennsylvania as well as better air quality. Kevin noted that \$3.25 million is not the total cost of the project because Norfolk Southern is matching the CMAQ funds with private funds.

Chuck DiPietro stated that the region had two diesel retrofit projects on the TIP and the supplemental CMAQ funds made it possible to fund two more diesel retrofits. Kevin responded that it will be interesting to see how the new technology tests out in the CMAQ evaluation. The diesel retrofit projects will be further discussed in the CMAQ Evaluation Committee meetings.

Steve Shanley reviewed some administrative actions related to two Allegheny County local projects (Scotia Hollow Bridge and Dookers Hollow Bridge). Cheryl Moon Sirianni suggested a name change on the Allegheny County Line Item to allow for increased flexibility in the use of the BOO funds. Chuck DiPietro stated that the TTC will move to approve the Allegheny County administrative actions and Cheryl and Karen Franks will meet after the meeting and agree on language to modify the name of the Allegheny County Bridge line item to accommodate the use of the BOO funds.

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 D**)

Adam Smith of PennDOT District 12-0 reviewed the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 12-0 had no amendment requests and four administrative actions this month.

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

## **5. Advance 2011-2014 TIP Update**

a.) STC Public Hearing for SPC for SPC region

Chuck DiPietro briefly reviewed the previous discussion of the rescheduling of the STC

hearing for November 5<sup>th</sup>. Matt Pavlosky encouraged everyone to submit their testimony in advance to avoid being placed at the end of the verbal testimony at the hearing. Lynn Heckman noted that you also need to submit the project forms if you are going to present verbal testimony at the hearing.

b.) First Round of TIP Update Work sessions

Chuck DiPietro reviewed what the TTC decided in the previous meeting regarding the location of the TIP work sessions, stating that there was a preference amongst the TTC to hold the TIP work sessions in the District offices, with the exception of one session in Westmoreland and one session in Lawrence. Chuck DiPietro reviewed the dates and times for the first round of TIP work sessions at each of the District Offices. Chuck commented that the additional session in Westmoreland County should be coordinated with Westmoreland County and District 12-0. Bill Piper responded that Lynn from the County Planning Department is coordinating several dates and times to propose to PennDOT District 12-0.

Discussion next turned to working to also schedule a work session in Lawrence County. Amy McKinney stated that she is not able to attend the first work session at District 11-0 on September 30<sup>th</sup>. After some discussion, it was agreed that a briefing would be scheduled for the Lawrence County Commissioners on October 1 (later scheduled for October 6) with an SPC member and a District 11-0 representative. Chuck DiPietro added that all SPC commission members will be notified of all the work sessions for the TIP update and are welcomed to attend any session. Chuck elaborated that the PPP chairs and individual TOC properties will also be invited to the work sessions for the TIP update. Chuck stated that it may be an option for the transit properties to break into their own session for part of the time to concentrate on the Transit TIP. Cheryl Moon Sirianni stressed the time management and adherence to the agenda will be critical at the work sessions. Chuck DiPietro recommended that all participants in the work session come prepared with updated project costs, their most pressing needs, and SPC commissioner input.

c.) Updated Schedule

After much discussion about the difficulty of scheduling both three rounds of TIP work sessions and up to five rounds of CMAQ evaluation committee meetings, it was decided that coordination to schedule the second and third rounds of TIP work sessions should begin immediately. Chuck DiPietro stated that staff would work to schedule these sessions immediately beginning with consulting the schedules of the District Executives.

d.) Financial Guidance

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the SPC 2011-2014 TIP Update Targets versus the current

2009-2012 TIP.

- The overall revenue available is a 17% reduction (\$312.5 million) for the region.
- State Act 44 funds are a 65% reduction compared to the current TIP.
- The State Highway funds are a 47% decrease and the State Bridge funds are a 34% decrease compared to the current TIP.
- The Federal Highway funds are an 18% decrease and the Federal Bridge funds are a 5% decrease compared to the current TIP.

Chuck concluded by stating these numbers are scary and will likely result in some project phases that are on the current TIP getting cut in the 2011 update. Cheryl Moon Sirianni added that design, right-of-way, and utility costs are continuing to increase faster than inflation. Dan Cessna commented that they are now experiencing attorney fees on almost all right-of-way acquisitions. Dan also expressed a concern that the lack of new projects in the TIP update may impact the consultants that PennDOT depends on.

e.) General and Procedural Guidance

Chuck DiPietro reviewed a few key points from the 2011-2014 TIP update General and Procedural Guidance.

- At a minimum, 90% of each MPOs Fund is recommended to be directed to system preservation projects.
- At a minimum, 85% of each MPOs bridge fund is recommended to be directed to structurally deficient bridges.
- The TIP shall only include a project or phase of a project if full funding can reasonably be anticipated to be available; also need to document the portion of the project cost that extends beyond the TIP.
- All cost estimates must reflect “year of expenditure.”
- The TIP must include all regionally significant transportation projects being advanced, regardless of their funding source.

Dan Cessna commented that there is no capacity to double program any projects in this TIP update. Chuck DiPietro encouraged the county representatives to come to the first work session with the status and priority of the local projects on the current TIP. Pat Hassett asked if the project cost increases and carryover projects for the CMAQ update have been identified yet. Chuck DiPietro responded that staff is currently preparing this information in preparation for the first CMAQ Evaluation Committee work sessions.

f.) Public Involvement Activities

Matt Pavlosky emphasized that the PPP chairs were going to be invited to the TIP work sessions so that they can be involved in briefing the PPPs in their respective counties.

(Attachment A)

The purpose of this is to educate the PPPs and inform them of the tight fiscal realities of the TIP update. Typically public participation for a TIP update would have begun back in the spring and this is a way to involve the PPPs directly and reduce the number of meetings required given the compressed schedule before us. Matt Pavlosky also proposed the idea of conducting web casts or recording the sessions for later addition to the web, particularly educational/kick-off forum content, for educational purposes. Cheryl Moon Sirianni expressed the need to stress the message that it is extremely likely that no new projects will be included in this TIP update. Chuck DiPietro stated that they must be open to public input about projects, but suggested it should be framed as primarily focusing on collecting input on the projects on the current TIP in terms of what projects should be retained versus others that will be deferred.

Chuck asked for input on how to interact with the PPPs and the timeline for this interaction. Jeff Leithauser stated that the municipalities need at least a month notice in advance so they can hold a municipal meeting prior to the scheduled PPP session. After some discussion, it was decided an education/kick-off session to the PPPs would be given as soon as possible followed by a feedback session in mid-November to brief the PPPs on the progress of the first rounds of TIP update work sessions.

g.) CMAQ Selection Committee Appointments (Handout 1)

Chuck DiPietro referred everyone to Handout 1, which detailed the nominees to the CMAQ Evaluation Committee and the seats on the committee that remain unfilled. Chuck urged the counties with vacant members to submit their CMAQ Committee appointees to Dan Bernazzoli as soon as possible. Dan stated that he has heard from Washington County, but the other vacancies remain unfilled at this time. Chuck DiPietro reviewed the dates of the CMAQ Evaluation Committee beginning with the first meeting on October 9<sup>th</sup>. Several CMAQ Evaluation Committee members in attendance provided the name of an alternate nominee.

Chuck DiPietro reiterated that the CMAQ candidate project applications are due by October 5<sup>th</sup>. On September 14<sup>th</sup>, SPC and Sustainable Pittsburgh held a joint information session for perspective project sponsors to receive answers to any questions they had regarding CMAQ applications.

## 6. Other Business

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

Doug Smith provided a review of the 2009 CMP network reassessment. Doug stated that the three-year CMP cycle is coming to an end and he is working on modification of the

(Attachment A)

network for the next CMP cycle. Doug urged everyone to review Attachment E and provide him any comments or revisions to the network. Bill Piper requested that SR 981 in Westmoreland County from U.S. Route 30 to the county airport be retained as a CMP corridor. At the next TTC meeting, Doug will present the final changes in the 2009-2012 CMP network. Chuck DiPietro added that the CMP is becoming increasingly important in both project development and evaluation.

b). September 16<sup>th</sup> TOC Report

Chuck DiPietro reported on the discussions on the last TOC meeting. Toby Fauver was present to give a report on various transit related projects statewide. Other TOC members provided updates on regional transit projects including Smart Card program and the West Busway TOD study. Several amendments and administrative actions were approved for the current transit TIP. Chuck DiPietro stated that the SPC staff is attempting to get more information on a major Port Authority amendment request for an \$80 million project titled "Enhanced Better Bus Initiative." The project involves the implementation of the enhanced rapid bus service between downtown and Oakland and is to be funded with discretionary ARRA TIGER funds.

c.) Freight Forum, October 6<sup>th</sup>

Sara Walfoort highlighted the proposed agenda for the October Freight Forum that will include a presentation by the Army Corps of Engineers on traffic studies related to the locks and dams on navigable rivers in the region.

d.) Pedestrian and Bicycle Committee, October 14th

Sara Walfoort highlighted the proposed agenda for the October Pedestrian Bicycle Committee that will include a presentation by Lynn Mannion of ACTA on bike/pedestrian activities in the airport corridor.

e.) PA DEP public comment period for proposed revision to SIP for PM 2.5

Chuck announced that the PA DEP will hold a public hearing concerning the proposed PM2.5 SIP revision at 1 p.m. October 6 at DEP's Southwest Regional Office, 400 Waterfront Dr., Pittsburgh. Written comments should be sent to the attention of Arleen Shulman, Chief, Air Resource Management Division, Bureau of Air Quality, P.O. Box 8468, Harrisburg, PA 17105-8468 or by e-mail to ashulman@state.pa.us no later than 4 p.m. October 9.

The next TTC is scheduled for Thursday October 15th at 10:00 AM.

(Attachment A)

**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.