

**LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION STUDY COORDINATING**  
**COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**June 19, 2013**

Members of the Coordinating Committee:

Attached is a copy of the minutes of the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study (LLTS) Coordinating Committee meeting, held on June 19, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. in Room 233 at the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Engineering District 4-0 Office, Dunmore, Pennsylvania.

Please check for errors or omissions.

Thank you.

A meeting of the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Coordinating Committee was held on Wednesday, February 27, 2013 in Conference Room 233 of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation District Office in Dunmore, Pennsylvania.

Mr. George Roberts, Chairman of the Coordinating Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:00 a.m. and asked for self-introductions. Mr. Roberts received a letter of proxy from James Arey stating that Mr. Dean Roberts will serve as his proxy. (NOTE: John Pocius is the permanent proxy for Chris Doherty Mayor of Scranton, Attilio "Butch Frati is the permanent proxy for Thomas Leighton Mayor of Wilkes-Barre, Dominic Yannuzzi is the permanent proxy for Joseph Yannuzzi Mayor of Hazleton, and James Rodway is the permanent proxy for Lackawanna County Commissioner James Wansacz.) Mr. Robert recognized Mr. Frank Paczewski as the Governor's appointee as the northeast representative on the State Transportation Commission.

In this document: Mr. Roberts identifies Mr. George Roberts, and Dean will identify Mr. Dean Roberts to avoid confusion.

Mr. Roberts stated for the record that in accordance with the provisions of the Sunshine Law and the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21), Coordinating Committee Secretary Adrian Merolli, submitted the required public meeting notice, which appeared in local papers.

### **ITEM #1 – FEBRUARY 27, 2013 LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION STUDY COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Copies of the February 27, 2013 Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Coordinating Committee meeting minutes were mailed to all committee members. Mr. Roberts asked for additions, deletions or corrections. Hearing none, a motion to approve the February 27, 2013 Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Coordinating Committee meeting minutes as noted, was made by John Pocius, seconded by George Kelly, and carried.

### **ITEM #2 – 2013-2016 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) MODIFICATIONS**

Copies of the 2013-2016 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) modifications were sent out to all committee members. Mr. Fisher highlighted the modifications to the 2013-2016 TIP, which included:

- Changes to address five Accrued Unbilled Cost (AUC) items
- Changes to address the low bid for the PA 435 Bridge over SR 348 – cost savings
- Moved final design phase of the Dorrance Park and Ride project

Mr. Roberts clarified that AUCs are from projects that utilize federal obligation funding for construction with cost increases that need to be paid with state funding to ensure the contractor is paid timely. The Department tracks AUCs because of the use of state funding instead of federal funding, and need to be addressed when additional federal obligation funding has been procured.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the Coordinating Committee moved to the next order of business – Transit TIP Modifications.

### **ITEM #3 – TRANSIT TIP MODIFICATIONS**

It was noted that the Transit TIP Modifications were also administrative actions and did not require a vote. Mr. Strelish noted that the project was originally on the 2013-2016 TIP to acquire property adjacent to the Luzerne County Transit Authority (LCTA) existing facility and demolish and turn the property into a parking area. Currently, LCTA is leasing property from Luzerne County. In the transition of taking over Shared Ride program, LCTA has determined that it would be more efficient to purchase the property, demolish the building, and construct a new building to house the Fixed Route and Shared Ride programs in one facility. The Shared Ride program is currently located in Forty-Fort and this would bring it to the LCTA Kingston facility. The estimated cost of the project is \$3,133,375 (\$330,300 Federal Formula Section 5307; Federal Flex Funds \$190,000; PennDOT Act 44 Section 1517 Capital \$633,075; PennDOT Consolidation Funds \$180,000 and PennDOT Community Transportation Capital \$1,800,000). The purchase of the property and the construction of a new building will enhance LCTA's entire operation allowing all departments to operate at one location providing more efficient handling of operations, maintenance and administrative duties. Mr. Merolli asked about environmental clearances, zoning and city limit concerns since the property is on the border of two municipalities. Mr. Strelish noted that the project was still in initial planning stages and LCTA will address all of these concerns, noting that the property is still in negotiation for purchase.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the Coordinating Committee moved to the next order of business – Urbanized Area Boundary Adjustment Memorandum of Understanding (MOU).

### **ITEM #4 – URBANIZED AREA (UZA) BOUNDARY ADJUSTMENT MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING (MOU)**

Mr. Pitoniak noted that Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA) is now an MPO not an RPO. A section of Lackawanna County extends into Wayne County which opted out of the MPO; at this time LLTS, at the direction of PennDOT Central Office, is not going to pursue this UZA extension. Another UZA extension is in the Northern Tier region southerly along US 6 in Factoryville/Clinton, Wyoming County and northerly on Route 171 in Forest City/Clifford, Susquehanna County. Working with Northern Tier, a MOU has been put together because of the changes in populations in the 2010 Census it is a federal requirement that the boundaries considered urban that extend outside the MPO boundaries. Using the population density from the 2010 census the planning partners formulated a percentage of transportation funding that will be transferred to Northern Tier for their portion of the UZA which, in this case, is 0.013%. An interesting note is that the Census Bureau defines a person's area of residence as where they are the majority of the year. And a couple reasons for the boundary changes are because of the prison in Wayne County and because of a nursing home in Susquehanna County. The Census Bureau is looking at changing the definition of residence so a prisoner staying at a corrective facility would be counted in their home area and not where they are incarcerated. Mr. Merolli noted that the current residence definition has also caused minority issues with environmental

justice, etc. because of the prison in Dallas and how the inmates are counted. Mr. Merolli also noted that NEPA has their MOU for the UZA/bleeds south of Hazleton into portions of Carbon and Schuylkill Counties.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, a motion was made that the Coordinating Committee adopt the Urbanized Area Boundary Adjustment Memorandum of Understanding with Northern Tier as presented for signature and execution, by Stan Strelish, seconded by John Pocius and carried.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, a motion was made that the Coordinating Committee adopt the Urbanized Area Boundary Adjustment Memorandum of Understanding with NEPA as presented for signature and execution, by Adrian Merolli, seconded by George Roberts and carried.

Of note: Because of the Urbanized Areas indicated by the 2010 Census the population increase to NEPA to create the status of MPO included Pike and Wayne Counties. Pike joined the MPO while Wayne decided to stand alone. Dean noted that Wayne County has to work as independent for a while and that in the next census boundaries may shift again. The Census Bureau starts fresh/wipes the slate clean and does the population counts and labels urban clusters from the new counts and does not take what was labeled before into consideration.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the Coordinating Committee moved to the next order of business – Other Business.

### **ITEM #5 – OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21)**

FHWA Transportation Planner Dan Walston reviewed handouts and gave a PowerPoint presentation on the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21). The handouts included guidance for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) and Interim guidance on Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) operating assistance under MAP-21. MAP-21 was voted into law July 2012, and was the last Transportation Authorization signed since SAFETEA-LU in 2005 and it is a two-year bill. MAP-21 took over 100 programs and streamlined them to a handful to make it easier and better to process with the agencies and transportation planning partners. MAP-21 creates a streamlined and performance-based surface transportation program and builds on many of the highway, transit, bike, and pedestrian programs and policies.

MAP-21 strengthens our economy and supports employment with much needed investment in the Nation's highway and public transportation systems. It expands multi-modal programs and provides provisions for flexible highway funds for transit. It supports the Department's aggressive safety agenda with increased funding and better linkages between the infrastructure safety programs and those that focus on vehicles and drivers. It simplifies the highway program structure, eliminating niche programs and putting most of the funds in the formula programs. It

provides new statutory support for accelerating project delivery, and it requires performance based planning to ensure that the funds are properly invested.

MAP-21 retains provisions for flexing highway funds to transit. FTA and FHWA continue to jointly administer state and metropolitan planning programs. MAP-21 encourages corridor planning with planning-environmental provisions. It requires representatives of public transportation providers to become voting members of MPO Boards in Transportation Management Areas (TMA's).

Funding is flat with only a small adjustment for inflation. This required identifying additional revenue for the Highway Trust Fund to ensure that the Trust Fund would remain solvent through the authorization period. The bill also substantially consolidates the current Federal-aid highway program structure. Federal-aid highway program has always had a large component of apportioned (formula) funding. Under MAP-21, although the number of apportioned programs has been reduced, about 99% of the funds for States will be from apportionments. Most discretionary programs have been eliminated – as have earmarks. This program structure, with a smaller number of broad programs will give States increased flexibility to program funds to meet national goals and state and local needs.

Mr. Walston reviewed the new program structure showing where the SAFETEA-LU programs lined up with MAP-21 programs; as well as a breakdown of the federal funding formula. Mr. Walston reviewed the transit funding programs (New, Repealed, Consolidated and Modified). All information can be found at the website [www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21](http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/map21).

Transportation Alternatives Program replaces the funding from the pre-MAP-21 programs for Transportation Enhancements, Recreational Trails, and Safe Routes to Schools, wrapping them into a single funding source. This was an area that required compromise in the conference process and provides some options for States to tailor to their own preferences. Unless the Governor of a State opts out, a portion of the TA funds is reserved for the Rec Trails Program. 50% of TA funds are sub-allocated to areas based on population (same approach used in STP). States and MPOs for urbanized areas with over 200,000 in population must conduct a competitive application process for the use of the sub-allocated funds. Eligible applicants include tribal governments, local governments, transit agencies, school districts, etc. Beginning 2 years after enactment (and annually thereafter), if the accumulated balance of TA funds exceeds one year's worth, State has the option to use the "excess" funds for CMAQ purposes. Additionally, the bill makes changes to current law regarding State authority to transfer funds between apportioned programs. Under the new provision, a State may transfer up to 50% of its TA funds to NHPP, STP, HSIP, CMAQ, and/or Metro Planning. The amount transferred must come from the portion of TA available for use anywhere in the State (no transfers of sub-allocated TA funds). Chris Mecca, of PennDOT and Kathy Dempsey, of FHWA are the contact people to help with the TAP applications and funding requirements.

Although it retains the basic purpose of CMAQ, MAP-21 makes some significant changes to the program:

- First, it requires large TMAs (over 1 million in population) to develop CMAQ performance plans.

- The plan would require measures and targets to assess two performance areas: On-road mobile source emissions and traffic congestion.
- It also requires that States with Performance Measure (PM) 2.5 nonattainment areas must use a portion of their funds for projects that would reduce PM 2.5.
- MAP-21 also expands the authority to use CMAQ funds for operating assistance for transit and other previously eligible projects; FHWA will be working on better defining the scope of this authority.
- Facilities serving electric or natural gas-fueled vehicles are now explicitly eligible in the legislation.
- Finally, MAP-21 also requires a study to assess the impact of the CMAQ program in improving air quality since it was enacted.

MAP-21 establishes a broad performance management program with a number of different aspects. It identifies a mixture of broad goal areas (safety, infrastructure condition, etc.) The bill requires USDOT to establish, with input, performance measures. In some cases Congress was more specific than others about what they wanted re: these measures. We'll need to sort out some of this out. After the measures are established, States will set performance targets, and State and metro plans will describe how program and project selection help achieve these targets. Then States will report to USDOT on their progress. It's worth noting that the reports will typically lead to corrective actions, but not sanctions. That said, there will be consequences if the condition of the NHS falls below thresholds established either by law (in the case of NHS bridges) or by USDOT (as required by MAP-21). These consequences would be triggered by the condition staying below minimum thresholds for multiple years, and would require a set-aside of a designated amount of NHPP \$ for Interstate or NHS bridge projects to address the conditions below the threshold.

MAP-21 establishes national performance goals for the Federal-aid highway program in seven areas:

- Safety - To achieve a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries on all public roads
- Infrastructure condition - To maintain the highway infrastructure asset system in a state of good repair
- Congestion reduction - To achieve a significant reduction in congestion on the National Highway System
- System reliability - To improve the efficiency of the surface transportation system
- Freight movement and economic vitality - To improve the national freight network, strengthen the ability of rural communities to access national and international trade markets, and support regional economic development
- Environmental sustainability - To enhance the performance of the transportation system while protecting and enhancing the natural environment
- Reduced project delivery delays - To reduce project costs, promote jobs and the economy, and expedite the movement of people and goods by accelerating project completion through eliminating delays in the project development and delivery process, including reducing regulatory burdens

Transportation Planning – some earlier drafts of reauthorization bills would have changed the threshold for MPO designation – for example, raising the existing 50,000 population threshold to 200,000. However, MAP-21 makes no changes to the population thresholds for MPOs or transportation management areas (TMAs). MAP-21 does include a number of provisions that attempt to integrate a new performance management approach into the existing metropolitan and statewide planning processes. Examples include: requirements that – States and MPOs establish performance targets; Long-range plans incorporate performance plans (or related elements) that are required under individual highway programs; and States and MPOs periodically report on the progress that they’re making in relation to their targets.

Freight Provisions – in contrast to some earlier versions of reauthorization bills, MAP-21 does not establish a formula freight program or provide dedicated funding for freight projects. However, MAP-21 does require DOT to: establish a national freight network; develop a national freight strategic plan; and report on freight conditions and performance. MAP-21 grants freight projects an increased Federal share when certain conditions are met. Projects to improve freight movement - the Secretary has the option to increase the Federal share of an Interstate System project to 95% (or of any other project to 90%) if the project is included in a State freight plan (as described in section 1118 of MAP-21) and if the project demonstrably improves the efficiency of freight movement. Furthermore, under MAP-21 DOT must encourage States to establish freight advisory committees and develop State freight plans to qualify for increased federal share.

Mr. Walston noted that FHWA is looking for commonality in the metrics across the nation and that PennDOT is already tracking items like, travel time, crash data, safety, and asset management and he did not foresee additional metrics being put in place by the federal government for DOTs to track.

Mr. Wansacz asked if there was funding available for passenger rail projects along with the freight rail projects. It was noted that there is not a specific funding set up for passenger rail projects. If a passenger rail project is on the state’s freight plan and is tied to or with freight rail project the possibility for funding would increase. This is a big question since a large share of the funding is for intermodal projects and at this point the parameters of the intermodal projects are unclear. The funding would need to be looked at on a project to project basis, and looking at the linking planning and NEPA process and environmental impacts.

### **Obligation Report**

Mr. Pitoniak noted that one of the findings from the Federal Review was a requirement for an Obligation Report. The report has been completed and submitted for comment. In the future a De-Obligation Report will be required through the Federal Review.

### **Bicycle/Hiking Map**

Mr. Pitoniak noted that the Pennsylvania Environment Council is looking at updating their bicycle and hiking trail map from 2009. The Council will be requesting funding from

Lackawanna County for updating that portion of the map. They will be updating to the map and have an online version that will have links on the map for local area attractions and businesses.

### **Transportation Funding**

Mr. Roberts noted that the Senate had passed the Transportation Funding Bill and that it is in the House. The Department is hoping for a new bill by the end of the fiscal year.

### **Hazleton Announcement/Projects**

Ms. Palermo thanked the District and Secretary Schoch for the presentation last week. Mr. Roberts noted that the presentation was an announcement of a funding increase to help the area with congestion calming projects. The other item for the presentation was to announce the agility agreement that PennDOT has with the Turnpike for winter services. In the upcoming season; PennDOT will provide the Turnpike with room in the dome building in the Dupont Borough / Pittston Township area for winter use and another facility for emergency salt stockpile in return the Turnpike will provide/produce salt brine for PennDOT.

It was noted that the Tomhicken Park-N-Ride of Route 93 near the I-81 Exit 145 (West Hazleton) is now open.

It was noted that the Broad Street Corridor project in Hazleton is in its third and final year of construction.

### **Scranton Signal Project**

Mr. Pocius noted that the Scranton CBD project is progressing well and that they are looking at the timing of the signals downtown to better coordinate traffic movement. All comments are being addressed as they come in.

### **Route 315**

Mr. Strelish noted that asked if a study had been done on Route 315 in the Jenkins Township / Pittston Township area because of the crashes and numerous accidents on the roadway, especially with all the businesses on each side of the four to five-lane highway. It was noted that the construction of the Airport Access Road will help alleviate some of the congestion. It was also noted that gaming monies are being looked at to widen Route 315 for dual off-ramp from Interstate 81.

### **Interstate 81**

It was noted that from the Airport Interchange project in Luzerne County north to the concrete section in Lackawanna County will be a two-inch mill and fill project. It will be night work and is scheduled to be done by October.



The interstate mill and fill does not include widening but the eight bridges that are currently under construction will be widened to be able to accommodate interstate widening if an interstate widening project comes through in the future. This work will also be completed at night. It was noted that there is no funding available for the interstate widening. Economic analyses will determine the feasibility of widening.

Exiting Route 315 South onto I-81 – the entrance ramp is an incline and if behind a truck; motorists are entering at close to twenty miles per hour. At this point in time the acceleration and deceleration lanes meet the current standards and are not being looked at for improvements.

### **Future Meetings**

The next Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for September 4, 2013 at 10:00 a.m. and the next Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for September 18, 2013 at 10:00 a.m.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, a motion to adjourn the Coordinating Committee meeting was made by Stan Strelish, seconded by John Pocius and the meeting adjourned at 11:15 a.m.

LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION  
STUDY MEETING - COORDINATING COMMITTEE  
June 19, 2013

	<u>MEMBER PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT AND NO PROXY</u>	<u>PROXY PRESENT</u>
George J. Roberts, P.E., Chairman	X		
James Arey, Central Office			X
<u>LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			
George Kelly	X		
James Wansacz (James Rodway – Permanent Proxy)	X		
<u>LUZERNE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION</u>			
Adrian F. Merolli	X		
<u>CITY OF HAZLETON</u>			
Joseph Yannuzzi, Mayor (Dominic Yannuzzi – Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>CITY OF SCRANTON</u>			
Chris Doherty, Mayor (John Pocius – Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>CITY OF WILKES-BARRE</u>			
Thomas M. Leighton (Attilio “Butch” Frati – Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE – LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			
Robert Fiume		X	
<u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE – LUZERNE COUNTY</u>			
Stanley Strelish	X		
<u>AVIATION REPRESENTATIVE</u>			
Barry Centini		X	
<u>*PENNSYLVANIA NORTHEAST REGIONAL RAILROAD AUTHORITY</u>			
Larry Malski		X	
<u>*FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION</u>			
Dan Walston	X		
<u>*FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)</u>			
Timothy Lidiak		X	
<u>*FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION</u>			
Lori Pagnanelli		X	
*Non-Voting Members			

Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Meeting Transportation Advisory Committee  
Members Present:

Donna Palermo, Greater Hazleton Chamber of Commerce

Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Meeting Technical Committee Members Present:

Steve Pitoniak, Lackawanna County Planning Commission  
Dean Roberts, PennDOT Central Office

Non-Members Present:

Frank Paczewski, State Transportation Commission  
Marie Bishop, PennDOT District 4-0, Planning and Programming  
Steve Fisher, PennDOT District 4-0, Planning and Programming  
John Frankosky, PennDOT District 4-0, Planning and Programming  
Michael Taluto, PennDOT District 4-0, Community Relations  
Samantha Antosh, PennDOT District 4-0, Community Relations  
Anna Fuhr, PennDOT District 4-0, Administration