

LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION STUDY
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
October 5, 2016

Members of the Technical Committee:

Attached is a copy of the minutes of the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Technical Committee meeting, which was held on October 5, 2016 at 10:05 a.m. in Conference Room 233 in the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Engineering District 4-0 Office, Dunmore, Pennsylvania.

Please check for errors or omissions.

Thank you.

Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study
Technical Committee Meeting
October 5, 2016 Technical Committee Meeting Summary and Minutes
 10:00 a.m.

Meeting Location:
Pennsylvania Department of Transportation
Engineering District 4-0 Office
55 Keystone Industrial Park
Dunmore, PA 18512

<u>Attendees:</u>	<u>Organization:</u>	<u>Attendees:</u>	<u>Organization:</u>
Susan Hazelton*	PennDOT District 4-0	Butch Frati *	City of Wilkes-Barre Permanent Proxy for Mayor George
Marie Bishop	PennDOT District 4-0	Steve Pitoniak*	Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission
Steven Fisher	PennDOT District 4-0	James Ferry*	Luzerne County Commission Planning
Gerard Babinski *	PennDOT District 4-0	Alan Baranski*	Northeastern PA Alliance Permanent Proxy for Jeff Box
Julianne Lawson	PennDOT District 4-0	Chris Chapman	Lackawanna County, Department of Planning & Economic Development
Peggy Voldenberg	PennDOT District 4-0	Daniel Butch*	Luzerne Co. Planning & Zoning
John Frankosky	PennDOT District 4-0	John Pocius*	City of Scranton Permanent Proxy for Mayor Courtright
James Weber*	Luzerne County Planning	Dean Roberts*	PennDOT Central Office
Matt Smoker	FHWA PA Division		

*Committee members who voted at this meeting.

Summary of Actions Taken by the LLTS Technical Committee

During the course of this meeting the LLTS Technical Committee voted on the following actions:

Action 1: Mr. Pitoniak called the meeting to order at 10:05am, no new proxies, received new committee appointments: Andrew Wallace, Lackawanna County Chief of Staff is replacing Corey O'Brien, and adding Larry West, Regional Director of Senator John Blake's Office as non-voting member for the Technical and Coordinating Committee to act as liaison between the Senator's office and the LLTS. He asked for a self-introduction by each person in attendance. Mr. Pitoniak stated for the record that in accordance with the provisions of the Sunshine Law and the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), Lackawanna County, submitted the required public meeting notice, which appeared in local papers for general circulation.

Action 2: Mr. Pitoniak noted copies of the July 6, 2016 Technical Committee Meeting minutes were distributed via email to all members of the committee. The minutes are now up on the website to all members of the committee. He noted there were some problems getting the notifications out for the meeting, emails were sent and only half of the committee received them; he apologized for any inconvenience and was unsure why it happen. The next meeting is scheduled for January 4, 2017, announcements will go out two weeks prior, and if the announcement is not received, to let them know. He asked if there were any additions, deletions, or

corrections to the minutes, hearing none, Mr. Pitoniak entertained a motion to approve the July 6, 2016 minutes, Mr. Ferry made the motion, Mr. Frati second it; motion carried.

Meeting Minutes:

1) BUSINESS ITEMS:

- a) **Approval of the Minutes from July 6, 2016 Meeting** – Mr. Pitoniak requested a motion from the Committee to approve the minutes from the July 6, 2016 meeting. Mr. Ferry made the motion, Mr. Frati second it; motion carried with the corrections.

2) 2015-2018 TIP MODIFICATIONS:

- a) **District 4-0 TIP Modifications** – Mr. Pitoniak noted copies of the 2015-2018 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) modifications were sent out electronically to all committee members, and are administrative actions for information purposes only; no amendments. Mr. Fisher highlighted the modifications to the 2015-2018 TIP, he noted there were a lot of basic end of the Federal Fiscal Year adjustments; the Federal Fiscal year ended on September 30, 2016

Administrative Action(s):

- 1) Added the PE Phase for MPMS# 84374- S.R. 309 over Laurel Run Creek beginning a new design for this project.
- 2) Central Office four ACT 13 projects:
MPMS# 107501 –T-406 over unnamed tributary.
MPMS# 107502 – T-718 Main St over unnamed.
MPMS# 107503 Laurel St over Laurel Run.
MPMS# 107504 T-510 over unnamed tributary.
- 3) Is the result of the Earmark re-distribution initiative as discussed at the previous LLTS meeting – MPMS# 50800, S.R. 309-330, Construction Phase - Upper Demunds/Hildebrant. MPMS# 104227, S.R. 3023-FPI, Construction Phase – Federal Aid Paving.
- 4) Construction cost increase on Rockwell Avenue Bridge, as a result of contamination that was discovered, which resulted in modifying the bridge design and with continuous environmental mitigation and monitoring.
- 5) Addressed an AUC on the Construction Phase of MPMS# 9017-S.R. 239 over Shickshinny Creek.
- 6) Increased on the Construction Phase of MPMS# 9037-Sydney Street Bridge to pay the final invoices.
- 7) Added the PE Phase of MPMS# 97839 – Daleville Park and Ride to the lighting design for the Park & Ride. The project is slated to bid by the end of this calendar year.

Mr. Fisher opened up to any questions or concerns. He has copies if anyone was interested in the 2015 TIP, and the 2017 TIP beginning October 1, 2016; no adjustments have been made to the 2017 TIP.

Mr. Pitoniak noted the earmark redistribution is currently underway and Central Office is still working on projects. At the July meeting, it was noted action would be taken this month but it will now be pushed out further. Funds were swapped from Wayne County to Lackawanna/Luzerne counties. It will be flipped back to a bridge in Wayne County next fiscal year this is something that is done on a routine basis within the District to advance projects.

Ms. Bishop reaffirmed that the funding that was received from Wayne County will be returned to Wayne County at the next meeting.

Mr. Roberts noted the repurposing of earmarks originally on a statewide level requested 197 transfers of repurpose funds for 120 million dollars to date on a state wide level and completed thirty three. Mr. Frati questioned additional funding for Sydney Street - are the estimates

already in or are they funded in; Ms. Bishop will have Construction Unit contact him regarding this issue, and cannot pay invoices until there is federal funding set up on the roadway project. As to whether those invoices have been submitted to the city, she is unsure.

Mr. Baranski questioned Rockwell Avenue Bridge project - what was the nature of contaminant. Mr. Pocius noted they were excavating for the footers and found some contamination at a very deep depth – oil base. There was a follow-up meeting with Environmental Protection in February/March 2016, which a plan of action was developed with the Department. A remediation plan was prepared due to the substance that was found on the Right-of-Way; monitoring of the water. The water had to be trucked off site due to it not meeting the discharge requirements to be put back in the stream; pumped and tanked out to a disposal site as well as the dirt. The monitoring went on for quite a while, and most recently received a clean bill of health. They do not have to monitor the water any longer, and can discharge back into the creek. The design of the bridge was altered, which affected a smaller area for potential contamination, and an investigative study was completed by PA Techtronic's which were brought on board through the contractor. It is a local firm that specializes in this field, and they were unable to pinpoint the source of contamination. It did not come from Kelleher's Tire property, and it could have already been in existence. Currently moving ahead trying get the project completed this year.

Mr. Pitoniak opened up for any questions or concerns. Mr. Ferry noted at the last Coordinating meeting two projects were mentioned, the first project is Division Street Bridge - there will be a meeting with Mr. Frati to put together some facts so the committee is aware. The second project is Foothill Drive, Butler Township - due to fiscal budgetary reasons, the Township is willing to assume final ownership once the road is completed. In regards to the presentation - Humboldt Industrial Park (HIP), SR 424; if there were any accommodations for bike/pedestrian traffic, and can it be addressed at this point with the idea of looking at comprehensive plans and alternate forms of transportations. Is it viable at this stage even if it was to share the road accommodations, and it was not part of the presentation from the engineer? Ms. Hazelton understood the cross section on the road was divided for eight to ten foot shoulders, which is more than adequate and should accommodate. She asked if there was a master plan by Hazle Township to show where to establish the bike/pedestrian route. He noted the Hazleton Rails/Trails project – S.R. 93 is only a few hundred yards away from S.R. 424, and thought it was to incorporate the trail into the access of that route with whatever safety accommodations that were needed. Ms. Hazelton noted it cannot be combined into the same project because now the project would have to start all over and would need to look into environmental process for S.R. 424; she suggested trail applications for either TAP or Multimodal to provide for that connection.

Mr. Roberts asked if he was looking for signing or painting of the road, and parking for the bike trail. Mr. Ferry noted minimal signing or sharing of the road, and the width is currently wide enough for bikes. There is a lot of low income families who work in the HIP and they do not have access to transportation. He sees a great deal of people walking up to HIP, and many residents from the community travel to HIP on bicycles. Mr. Roberts asked if he expected a large amount of truck traffic. Mr. Ferry noted from I-81 into the park will be the primary truck traffic off of I-81.

Mr. Pitoniak noted S.R. 424 Extension - Functional Class was approved by the Federal Highway; PennDOT is revamping LPN System, and one of the criteria is pre-approved plans prior to submission. This information was received recently from Central Office; if a community has a master/corridor plan or for example a bike route, as long as it is not overly expensive to do, PennDOT will include that in the project. This is getting the input in earlier in the system, but it does come down to the locals in having some initiative and putting together comprehensive and master plans. He noted in this case a trail/bicycle plan, if that was in affect

and presented to PennDOT in the beginning of the process it would have been incorporated, and county planners, need to start pushing their communities more to start doing some comprehensive planning. In Lackawanna County it is expensive to execute and communities tend to shy away in doing comprehensive planning. Mr. Ferry noted once this is in place, there will be an increase of bike traffic, and it is worthy of bringing up and discussing.

Mr. Pocius noted in late August 2016, he attended conference in Lancaster PA. One of the topics were a new chapter in Design Manual dealing with Pedestrians/Bike routes. It should be brought up very early in preliminary engineering process, the input should be obtained from the communities, and all should be reviewed very early on so issues can be caught early; it is a preliminary engineering type phase. Ms. Hazelton noted any candidate projects will be a requirement for coordination of municipalities for any comprehensive plans.

Mr. Pitoniak noted at the Spring Planning Partners meeting, Secretary Richards mention their trying to get all the Districts in the state to hire or have someone in charge for community planning. Ms. Hazelton noted District 4-0 currently has a position posted.

Mr. Baranski noted this is to get local input on all new TIP projects that will be advanced onto the TIP and to obtain local input. The local input can be coordinated at a District or MPO level depending upon resources in capacity and who has the established relationships at that local level. Policies will be coming out, their currently under development and anticipating in the Spring 2017 to institute this policy.

Mr. Ferry questioned the Round About Project (Dallas 5-Leg, MPMS# 70249) if there were any kind of input from District 4-0; if their securing space, easements or ownership rights to store all the equipment during the project rather it be incorporated into a Park and Ride plan. He talked to someone from the area and it was discussed, and the preference is not to take property that is high developmental potential or if it was already decided on what property is going to be used. Ms. Hazelton noted the properties have already been acquired; in regards to any of the residual properties, the District could look at them for potential Park & Ride. There are other properties around that were deposed or considered, and have gone through a couple of properties that the Department owns for that purpose. She noted some of them may not be large enough for parking spaces, and there are other properties along S.R. 309 corridor that have been considered and may be on the Long Range Plan for Park & Ride.

Mr. Pitoniak noted since they're only modifications; no action required. He stated there was one request from COLTS for modification back in our July meeting, and will follow-up. The committee moved onto the next item on the agenda MPO Coordination and Reform.

3) MPO Coordination and Reform:

Mr. Pitoniak noted this was discussed during the Technical Committee Meeting in July 2016, at that time, the Federal Highway was adamant they were not going to extend the comment period; three weeks after the comment period closed they reopened it up again.

Mr. Smoker noted it isn't geared to any legislation, and is not a result of the FAST Act or MAP 21; it is some changes to enhance the coordination efforts and this proposal might enhance or better coordinate the function of an MPO. In June 2016, they issued a notice of proposal to go out for a 60 day public review and comment period. Federal Highway usually does 90-120 day public comment period on any proposed rule making process, and this one initially came out on 60 days. Based upon the feedback from the Federal Highway and Federal Transit, there were over 550 comments submitted asking for additional time from the highest level. The public comments period closed the end of August, but re-open two weeks ago, it will now close in the middle of October 2016 giving additional time. The goal of the proposed revisions is to promote unified planning products for each urbanized area even if there is multiple MPOs within an

urbanized area. It pushes for consolidation, ideally one MPO for one urbanized area or because of geographically state lines to have one planning product, one TIP, and one LRTP for every urbanized area. He noted most of the urbanized areas is contained within MPO boundaries, and some of the largest impact is down in Southeastern PA. If there is one urbanized boundary there should be one MPO, if that is not possible, there should be at least one TIP, and one plan for urbanized area. They received many comments across the nation and from Congress asking Federal Highway to slow down; subsequently, the Federal Highway headquarters placed it back out for another 30 days. He has glanced through the comments, noting there were not a lot of support for the proposed regulations; most of the comments were negative stating it is not needed. Mr. Roberts noted back on August 25th Pennsylvania did submit an eight page letter with comments that did mirror those of the surrounding states, MPOs, and RPOs within our state. As the legislation is written out, they cannot support it due to being very complex, costly, as well as the bureaucracy. When it comes to these decisions, they believe the MPO structure and Planning Partner structure should be the decision of that MPO or government in coordination with the governor of the state. He stated if anyone was interested in the letter he would be happy to share it. Mr. Pitoniak noted they work with NEPA and LLTS works with Lehigh Valley; a letter was submitted from the three MPOs in opposition to it, and theoretically if the legislation was read, it is coordinating from North of Boston to South of Washington and out to Cleveland. It is an ongoing issue, and there will be additional discussions, and several Congressmen and Senators did send opposition letters to the Federal Highway. Mr. Pitoniak noted in January 2017 there will be a change in administration, and the MPO Coordination and Reform is an ongoing issue; it will be addressed again in January 2017 meeting. He asked for any questions or concerns; hearing none the committed moved on to MPO Website.

4) MPO Website – www.lltsmpo.com:

Mr. Pitoniak noted they hired a consulting agency to come in and design the website; there are three administrators on the site for each of the following: Lackawanna County, Luzerne County, and PennDOT. He noted if a TIP Amendment/Modification, a new project, or issues arise the administrator for PennDOT can enter it in on the website immediately. He noted Mr. Chapman is the primary person working with the developers and will do a quick review.

Mr. Chapman noted this was a group effort and this week they will have full rights and administration privileges to go ahead and edit, and welcomed any feedback. He wanted to keep a clean and straight forward background on the website.

He reviewed briefly a quick description of the MPO; noting the tabs are at the top, technical committee members are listed on the site, and their goal was trying to make it as easy as possible. Mr. Pitoniak noted one of the glitches - when they did the agenda and adding the TIP projects at the end because it was a different format, they didn't print out correctly; they're currently addressing this issue. Mr. Chapman noted next time they will make it two or three different documents, TIP will be its own document because it did not merge well with the others; all the minutes are included and it ended up to be a 44 page document. He welcomed any feedback. Mr. Pitoniak noted the meeting minute's schedules will be updated, there will be connections if anyone sends them email about a project regarding concerns, and they will be added automatically on to an email list and from that point on they will be notified.

Mr. Baranski noted MPO/Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) information as far as the meeting and core schedule they have a website and will share the file as a separate link or it can be loaded onto one of the pages. Another item is the Focus 81 Committee; a link to their page or share it on the website. Mr. Pitoniak noted they will be developing links for the MPOs across the Commonwealth. Mr. Chapman noted the links that are currently up are PennDOT, Lackawanna/Luzerne Counties, mapping products, MPMS IQ, and the TIP Map which can be integrated. Mr. Baranski noted they will give them the proper format and information to get it

out to the public. Mr. Chapman stated they created a Facebook page, and the Technical Committee Meeting was advertised on Facebook. Mr. Smoker noted the website is very simple and clean; Mr. Pitoniak noted they reviewed a number of websites from MPOs across the nation, other transportation organizations, and transits agencies noticing some were very busy and they tried to make it simple to import documents. Mr. Ferry asked if Facebook will be continuing updating; Mr. Smoker confirmed and noted it is the best way to get information out quickly. Mr. Pitoniak asked the committee for any questions or concerns on the website – Hearing none he moved onto other business.

5) OTHER BUSINESS:

Mr. Pitoniak noted Mr. Chapman put together a presentation to review projects- upcoming projects on the TIP, and let dates.

Mr. Chapman reviewed the following projects that will be starting in August 1, 2017 until the end of the year.

- West Pittston Street Scape improvement; earmark that was obligated to the project and three-way intersection with Erie Avenue / Second Street.
- MPMS# 104323 – TAP project that was awarded 2014 it is currently on the TIP – Wilkes University street scape project; this is their main corridor in downtown Wilkes-Barre. Two streets in the City of Wilkes-Barre - South Franklin Street and West South Street.
- MPMS# 67299 – Already Let, Bridge Rehab - SR 29 over Harvey Creek, and Slide Repair on Chase Road in Jackson Township. Ms. Hazelton noted they are dated at the same time, and there is one contractor working on both of the two projects.

Upcoming Projects:

- Kingston Township Memorial Highway – restoration
- MPMS# 93039 - SR 3021(Old Turnpike Road) over Nescopeck Creek, Butler Township – bridge replacement
- MPMS# 9026 – SR 4007 over Shickshinny Creek, Bridge replacement.
- MPMS# 9085 – SR 1061 over Harvey’s Creek, Bridge replacement – expected to be let in September 2017.
- MPMS# 97839 – Daleville Park & Ride. Construction of Park & Ride lot on SR 307, I-380, Exit 20, in Covington Township, Lackawanna County.
- MPMS# 102906 – Carbondale Riverwalk – TAP project from 2014; construction of two mile section of trail, linking Carbondale to Fell Township, Lackawanna County.

Mr. Pitoniak noted this information will be on the website to give more detail, and there will be a short presentation at each meeting to review status of projects, and welcomes any suggestions or ideas.

Adoption of 2017 TYP / Federal Highway – Mr. Smoker noted the Federal Highway - approval for the STIP on September 29th. It is not only an approval of the STIP, but required Federal binding; they need to take a comprehensive look at the whole MPO / RPO state wide metropolitan planning process, and identify any strengths or weaknesses in areas that need to be improved that might not be meeting the federal aid regulations or enhancements. They issued last week three pages of acknowledging PennDOT and MPO/RPO is a strong process, and other states are coming to Pennsylvania inquiring about the RPO process. He acknowledge other strengths – PennDOT and MPO/RPOs support for performance driven process; Map 21 is performance driven / performance management, and there are some items that may need to be worked upon. He noted PennDOT programs - they’re working with the Bureau of Equal Opportunity with the MPOs/RPOs on public involvement making sure there is the latest

documentation available concerning accommodations. He encouraged feedback from the committee, and asked for any questions or concerns. Mr. Pitoniak asked if there was any information concerning the certification review; Mr. Smoker recently talked to FTA, and it is in their hands; they are working on a lot of closeouts getting contracts in place before their fiscal year.

Mr. Pitoniak noted the Fall Planning Partners meeting will be October 11th & 12th 2016 in Camp Hill. He has not seen the agenda and the consolidation for the MPO's, and repurpose Earmarks will be an item for the agenda.

6) Adjournment:

Mr. Pitoniak thanked everyone for attending; the next Technical Coordinating Committee meeting will be on January 4, 2017, followed by the Coordinating Committee Meeting on January 18, 2017.

There being no further business, he entertained a motion to close the LLTS Technical Committee meeting; Mr. Pocius made the motion; Mr. Babinski second it; motion carried. Meeting adjourned at 11:40 a.m.