

**LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION STUDY**  
**COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING**  
**April 19, 2017**

Members of the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Committees:

Attached is a copy of the minutes of the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Coordinating Committee meeting, held on April 19, 2017 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 (LLTS) Coordinating Committee was held on Wednesday, January 18, 20147 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 10:05 a.m. Mr. Roberts received a letter of proxy from Mr. George Kelly stating that Mr. Steve Pitoniak will serve as his proxy. (All permanent proxies are listed in the committee member list attached to these minutes.)

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

Mr. Roberts thanked Mr. Arey for chairing the past meetings that Mr. Roberts could not attend. Mr. Roberts also introduced Deputy Secretary for Planning Jim Ritzman who presented the Secretary's PennDOT Connects program.

### **ITEM #1 – PENNDOT CONNECTS**

Mr. Ritzman noted that PennDOT Connects is being put in place to ensure the Department is more aware of what community needs, interests and perspectives are well before decisions are made on what scheduled work should look like. Mr. Ritzman noted:

The goal of PennDOT Connects Better Communities and Mobility Powered through Collaboration

- PennDOT Connects builds partnerships that invest in sustainable transportation.
- PennDOT Connects leverages resources to improve communities.
- PennDOT Connects leads and innovates for a more livable Pennsylvania.
- PennDOT Connects delivers projects that improve economic competitiveness, access to work, and overall quality of life.

And, PennDOT is:

- Investing in a community with each project.
- Involving communities at the beginning of the planning process.
- Learning what elements may be important to include in the project to support a community's vision.

Funding is still a hurdle, but there are many grants, safety fund candidates and multi-modal grant type programs that will allow the local entities to get funding needed to cover all mobility needs (Bicycle, Pedestrian, Transit Freight, Operations and ITS, Utilities, Community Health, Storm Water Management, Green Infrastructure). This would also require comprehensive planning by counties, municipalities and local transportation stakeholders to ensure such plans (new projects, safety upgrades, emergency response improvements, etc.) can be presented at project inception. "The closer you look the more you see, the closer you listen the more hear."

It was also noted that Planning and Programming is working on the scoring criteria for the different rounds of funding applications (TAP, ARLE, etc.) to give projects utilizing the

PennDOT Connects process more value in rankings. This is also part of the performance metrics. Initial conversations for projects that include all user mobility concerns, gives locals time to apply for grants or put monies they have set for these types of projects in place to move forward with all aspects of a project concurrently. Or enable them to plan completion of these types of projects at the best time prior to the start of a PennDOT project or after completion of a PennDOT project.

Two examples in District 4 are River Street Traffic Calming project in Wilkes-Barre and the sidewalk installations included in the Dunmore Signals Project. Traffic and Design worked with Dunmore to create safer pedestrian movement, it was noted one of the sticking points was maintenance and ownership of the sidewalks which the District and Municipality were able to work through and create a more walkable community.

Mr. Williams noted that for the project in Wilkes-Barre, there was a lot of input given for the roadway and bridge users other than motorists but the designers did not put all the suggested amenities in the project and there was a bicyclist fatality. It was noted that although PennDOT Connects strives to be all inclusive in considerations for every roadway user, funding constraints continue to affect what can be covered through projects and prioritization is key. Any fatality is unfortunate, and it was noted that the bicyclist had run a red light and hit a vehicle that had the right-of-way.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Approval of the January 18 ,2017 Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes.

### **ITEM #2 – JANUARY 18, 2017 LLTS COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES**

Copies of the January 18, 2017 Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Coordinating Committee meeting minutes were sent out to all committee members and are available on the new LLTS website. Mr. Roberts asked for additions, deletions or corrections. Hearing none, a motion to approve the January 18, 2017 Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Coordinating Committee meeting minutes was made by Steve Pitoniak, seconded by John Pocius and carried.

### **ITEM #3 – 2017-2020 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) MODIFICATIONS**

#### **2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Modifications**

Copies of the 2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) modifications were sent out to all committee members. Mr. Fisher highlighted the modifications to the 2017-2020 TIP, which included:

- Decreasing the Construction phase of SR 11 and SR 239 paving in Luzerne for an updated estimate
- Adding the Construction phase of White Birch Road extension -APL- project in Luzerne to the TIP. Additional funds to the region.

**2017-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Modifications continued:**

- Adding the Construction phase of MPMS 90260 – SR 6006 over Lackawanna River in Lackawanna to the FFY2019/2020 per project schedule
- Moving de-obligated federal funds from this federal fiscal year to the reserve line item to use on future increases or adjustments
- Adjust the TIP amounts to match the agreement for the Main St. Corridor phase III A signal project in Lackawanna.
- Adding the preliminary engineering, final design and construction phases of Nanticoke Streetscape in Luzerne to process the agreement.
- Increasing the construction phase of Rockwell Avenue Bridge in Lackawanna for additional contamination mitigation (trucking spoil water to Baltimore), redesign of the bridge footing to reduce the impact of the contamination area
- Adding the final design phase of the Dunmore Signal Project in Lackawanna – MPMS 95263 – CE (environmental clearance document) cleared.
- Adding the Back-Mountain Trail Mile 7 and D&L Trail Middleburg Crossing enhancement projects in Luzerne to the TIP. (from Central Office, statewide approved TAP projects)
- Adding the 3 regional approved enhancement projects. Keystone College (partially fund), Lackawanna River Heritage Trail (fully fund), Greater Hazelton Rails to Trails (fully fund) in Lackawanna and Luzerne
- Adding the Wilkes University enhancement project in Luzerne and fully fund the remainder of the Keystone Enhancement project in Lackawanna from the statewide pot of money.
- Increasing the construction phase of MPMS 7763 – Lackawanna Avenue Bridge in Lackawanna to address an accrued unbilled cost (AUC)
- Decreasing the construction phase of MPMS 93000 – SR 438 over Elm Brook in Lackawanna to the low bid amount.
- Decreasing the Construction phase of MPMS 97839 – Daleville Park and Ride in Lackawanna to the low bid amount.

Mr. Fisher noted that the TIP changes were modifications not amendments and would not require a vote.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Upcoming TIP Projects.

**ITEM #4 – UPCOMING TIP PROJECTS**

Mr. Chapman noted that the upcoming projects to be let later this year. Providing a map of projects let from April through June. These projects included:

- MPMS 95482 – encompasses three projects and is the only one in Lackawanna County – all bridge rehabs to be let May 18, 2017 – ramp bridge to the Central Scranton Expressway outbound, SR 11 Bridge over Susquehanna in Pittston and SR 2007 South Street in Wilkes-Barre
- MPMS 93025 SR 2017 (Yatesville Road) over SR 2021 (South Township Boulevard) in Jenkins Township to be let June 8, 2017 – rehab

- MPMS 93022 in Laflin SR 2015 (Market Street) for bridge replacement – let date June 8, 2017
- MPMS 105383 and MPMS 105176 are US 11 signal improvements in Forty Fort – no let date available
- MPMS 8776 – Mary Street over the Reading Blue Mountain and Northern Railroad in Fairview Township – bridge removal – let date June 22, 2017
- MPMS 67396 – SR 3004 over Forge Creek in Newport Township – bridge replacement – let April 20, 2017
- MPMS 93035 – SR 3006 (Lily Lake Road) over Pond Creek in Conyngham Township – bridge replacement – let date June 22, 2017
- MPMS 102909 – D&L Trail Enhancement in Dennison Township – May 18, 2017
- MPMS 105385 – SR 940, SR 2049 and SR 3022 in Freeland Borough – safety improvements – no let date
- MPMS 93040 Conyngham Borough – SR 3034 (Sugarloaf Avenue) over Nescopeck Creek – bridge replacement – let date May 4, 2017

It was noted that the projects that did not have let dates are either multi-modal or ARLE funded and being run by sponsors, let dates will be added to the system once there are better completion dates provided by the sponsors. It was also noted that these funding are the type of alternate funding Mr. Ritzman noted in the PennDOT Connects presentation.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFC) and Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFC).

**ITEM #5 – CRITICAL URBAN FREIGHT CORRIDORS (CUFC) AND CRITICAL RURAL FREIGHT CORRIDORS (CRFC)**

Mr. Butch noted that statewide FHWA allotted Pennsylvania 141.26 miles statewide for Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFC) and 282.53 miles statewide for and Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFC). LLTS MPO submission includes the following:

Urban State:

1. Casey Highway from Dunmore to Jessup – 4.99 miles
2. State Route 315 from I-81 North on-ramp to I-81 South in Pittston and Jenkins Township – 2.40 miles

Urban Local:

1. Keystone Avenue, Jenkins Township from SR 315 to CenterPoint Boulevard – 0.35 mile
2. CenterPoint Boulevard, Jenkins Township from Keystone Avenue to Research Drive – 1.48 miles

Rural State:

1. SR 924 from county line to I-81 – 3.78 miles
2. Casey Highway from Jessup to Carbondale – 10.54 miles

Rural Local:

1. Commerce Drive, Hazle Township from beginning of roadway to SR 924 – 0.85 mile
2. Maplewood Drive, Hazle Township from end of roadway to SR 924 – 0.90 mile

As a total for submission, LLTS MPO requested 23 segments at 50.39 miles for urban state; 21 segments at 18.12 miles for urban local; 5 segments at 18.25 miles for rural state; and 7 segments at 5.66 miles for rural local segments. Again, the state was allotted a total of 141.26 miles for urban and 282.53 for rural designations shared across the Commonwealth. This most recent request from FHWA reflects an increase in the mileage caps for both CUFC and CRFC networks from the last request from FHWA a few years ago, the hope is this submission for the mileage listed would help to be an impetus for another increase in mileage for the program. The MPO's submission is on the LLTS website [www.lltsmpo.com](http://www.lltsmpo.com).

It was noted that PennDOT Central Office has all the planning organizations' submissions from across the state and is holding meetings to determine / whittle the list down to corridors most prevalent statewide as well as have the submission within the FHWA parameters.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Downtown Bike Study.

### **ITEM #6 – DOWNTOWN BICYCLE STUDY**

Mr. Pitoniak noted as part of the planning process the MPO must look at all modes of transportation, from bridge and highways to pedestrians. The bicycle plan for this MPO is a few years old and is out of date. Three years ago, working with the Pennsylvania Environmental Council (PEC) the MPO put together a trail map of the northeast portion of the state and update the map into the bicycle study. Lackawanna County is one of the fastest growing commuter corridors for bicycles in the Commonwealth. Various points throughout the county are not connected with safe efficient bicycle routes. Working with Luzerne County the MPO decided to work on downtown areas first.

The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) requested that the entire MPO area be done. The MPO looked at the scope of work and decided to begin in the downtown areas and work to cover the rest of the northeast. Examples include the Heritage Trail in Scranton that the Lackawanna Valley Heritage Authority (LHVA) has developed along the river and Nay Aug Park is on the other side of the city where there is no safe bicycle route between the trail and the largest park in the city that also provides greater access to the downtown. Similarly, in Wilkes-Barre they do not have a bicycle connection from their CBD to the D&L Trail. There are several other points of access to be considered such as universities and hospitals in the downtowns which is also something that is included in PennDOT Connects.

The application for \$150,000 study was submitted last week to DCNR, this would be a 50/50 grant with DCNR. \$75,000 from DCNR and \$37,500 from each county. Lackawanna County is planning on \$7,500 in in-kind services (planning and engineer), the City of Scranton has provided \$1,000 and a bicycle club has given \$100 toward the study.

Mr. Ferry noted that Luzerne County is very enthused to participate and is looking at the alternate modes of transportation and additional bicycle access would also help decrease traffic congestion and pollution and in addition connect to the trails, universities and river

commons. Luzerne County is also looking at services in-kind and is looking at funding from DCED (which will also require a match at a lower share for the county) and looking to other funding sources to meet the 50/50 share.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that this was an important endeavor and that the MPO is looking at a number of funding sources. The MPO would use money from its regular work plan and look to PennDOT for additional funding possibilities if the funding requests come up short. Mr. Pitoniak thanked Mr. Chapman, Mr. Butch and Mr. Manseau for all the work they have put into this project to have it move forward. Especially as they were filling out the application and two hours prior the application deadline the application disappeared from the computer and the submission was finally retrieve to just make the deadline.

Mr. Pitoniak reminded everyone that local projects and studies need plans to help ensure they are part of the 360 planning and PennDOT Connects programs. This type of documentation is what is being looked as projects are introduced in the region. Mr. Ritzman reiterated that Central Office will also be looking at these types of documentation as different funding rounds become available for alternate transportation projects and their rankings.

It was noted that the study may take six months to a year depending on construction projects and the weather since they affect data gathering capabilities. They are hoping to start the study later this year once the funding has been secured. Mr. Ritzman reminded the MPO to keep PennDOT in the loop as funding becomes available.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Transit Consolidation and Approved Resolutions.

#### **ITEM #7 – TRANSIT CONSOLIDATION AND APPROVED RESOLUTIONS**

Mr. Pitoniak noted that the study initiated by Deputy Secretary Fauver, years ago, for the merger or consolidation of the transit authorities in Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties has already brought changes to the transit programs. Currently, combined ticketing, sharing services and maintenance purchasing is being done between the two counties. The study needs to be updated and a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is required between the counties and authorities for PennDOT to run the study. The MPO has received the required signatures and hopes to start the study update within next few months.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Spring Planning Partners' Meeting.

#### **ITEM #8 – SPRING PLANNING PARTNERS' MEETING**

Dean noted that the spring Planning Partners' meeting is set for May 1 and May 2, 2017 at the Materials Testing Lab in Harrisburg. Discussions will include the 2019 program and all the associated guidance. Space is limited and each agency is asked to limit attendance to two people.

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – 2017 Meeting Schedule.

### **ITEM #9 – 2017 MEETING SCHEDULE**

- Combined Technical & Coordinating Committee Wednesday July 19, 2017
- Technical Committee Wednesday October 4, 2017
- Coordinating Committee Wednesday October 18, 2017

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

### **ITEM #10 – OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Cedar Avenue**

Mr. Pocius indicated that Cedar Avenue in Scranton is riddled with potholes, mostly cause by utility cuts. It was noted that utility work is frustrating because emergency work is not scheduled and the District rarely receives a listing of scheduled work. The District will have their Permit Unit touch base with the utilities to have the cuts properly repaired. Scranton has had many problems with the utilities and is at odds with their latest utility cut ordinance. It is frustrating how the utilities have delayed projects or cut newly paved roadways.

#### **Focus 81**

Mr. Williams asked if the Department handles the interstate and funding repairs to the roadway and bridges, are special interest groups such as Focus 81 a waste of funding. It was noted that the Department does gather information from groups like Focus 81 and Safe 80 across the Commonwealth.

Mr. Arey noted that Central Office will be riding the interstate to prioritize needs on the statewide level including the increasing number fracture critical bridges across the Commonwealth. It was noted that these groups are a positive because they help the planning partners look at the interstate at a more regional level.

Mr. Williams concerns also included that rail use is not a focus for these groups leaving no opening for multi-modal funding. It was noted that Focus 81 part of the multi-state Interstate 81 Corridor Coalition has gathered rail data from each of the states for use in freight movement options. It was also noted that Focus 81 discussion are cyclical and have included rail freight, getting trucks off the interstate, and will include these concerns in the future.

#### **Information Sharing (Highway Occupancy Permit)**

Mr. Ferry noted that meeting with the county planning commission representatives have planned quarterly meetings to discuss possible Highway Occupancy Permit requests for development coming to a region and any local ordinances that will need to be addressed by an applicant; and to inform the District of improvements or projects being planned so they can begin any needed processes that are required through the transportation arena prior to breaking ground.



### **Multi-Modal – Scranton/Wilkes-Barre International Airport**

Mr. Gavlick noted that LCTA will soon have a regular bus route to the Scranton/Wilkes-Barre International Airport and the fare will be \$1.50 from anywhere in Luzerne to the airport. LCTA will have bus stop signs installed and is working with the airport to secure a permanent bus stop at the airport entranceway.

Mr. Pitoniak noted the airport is also rewriting its master plan to incorporate the transit and rail components. It was also noted that the airport has been asked to keep transit (buses, taxis, etc.) in mind as they develop the area where the old terminal building is being removed to have an area for central public transit accessibility.

### **Railway Operations**

Mr. Williams asked how PennDOT evaluates county regional rail operations. It was noted that much of the rail operations go back to the private sector. Different rail freight programs are across the Commonwealth used on short rail line use. The gas industry has boosted rail use in this region. Regional plans would still be needed to have broader program impacts.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that Mr. Malski of the Pennsylvania Northeast Rail Authority has been very successful with a merger through grant from rail assistance programs. Mr. Gavlick noted that he has been working with the rail authority to ensure land can be conveyed from the Redevelopment Authority to keep access to the rails for future passenger considerations between Scranton and Wilkes-Barre.

### **Appreciation**

Mr. Arey thanked Mr. Ritzman and Mr. Fisher for the work they have done and continue to do to bring PennDOT Connects to the forefront in this region.

Mr. Pitoniak thanked the Department for all the work being done on the Central Scranton Expressway while it is closed for the Harrison Avenue Bridge project. It was noted that the expressway is being patched and that it is slated for paving in 2019.

Mr. Pocius thanked the District for staying with the City of Scranton with the additional contamination remediation needs.

### **Adjournment**

Mr. Roberts asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, a motion to adjourn the LLTS Coordinating Committee meeting was made by Jim Arey, seconded by John Pocius and the meeting adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION  
STUDY MEETING - COORDINATING COMMITTEE  
April 19, 2017

<u>COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</u>	<u>MEMBER PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT &amp; NO PROXY</u>	<u>PROXY PRESENT</u>
<u>PENNDOT</u>			
George J. Roberts, P.E., Chairman	X		
James Arey, Central Office	X		
<u>LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			
George Kelly	X		
Patrick O'Malley		X	
<u>LUZERNE COUNTY PLANNING COMMISSION</u>			
C. David Pedri, County Manager – (James Ferry – Permanent Proxy)	X		
<u>CITY OF HAZLETON</u>			
Jeffrey L. Cusat, Mayor - (Dominic Yannuzzi – Permanent Proxy & Committee Vice-Chair)	X		
<u>CITY OF SCRANTON</u>			
William Courtright, Mayor – (John Pocius – Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>CITY OF WILKES-BARRE</u>			
Anthony George, Mayor – (Attilio “Butch” Frati – Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE – LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			
Robert Fiume		X	
<u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE – LUZERNE COUNTY</u>			
Norm Gavlick – (Kathy Bednarik – Permanent Proxy)	X		
<u>AVIATION REPRESENTATIVE</u>			
Carl Beardsley		X	
<u>*FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION</u>			
Matthew Smoker		X	
<u>*FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)</u>			
Timothy Lidiak		X	
<u>*FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION</u>			
Lori Pagnanelli		X	
<u>*SENATOR BLAKE’S OFFICE (LACKAWANNA)</u>			
Larry West, Regional Director	X		

\*Non-Voting Members

Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Meeting Technical Committee Members Present:

Steve Pitoniak, Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission, Tech. Comm. Chair  
Dean Roberts, PennDOT Central Office Planning  
Daniel Butch, Luzerne County Planning and Zoning  
Kathy Bednarik, Luzerne County Transit Authority

Non-Members Present:

Jim Ritzman, PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Planning  
Doug Hein, County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS) for Bob Fiume, COLTS Exec. Dir.  
Chris Chapman, Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission  
Tanis Manseau, Luzerne County Planning  
Owen Worozbyt, LHVA  
Joe Corcoran, LHVA  
Janet Hall, Luzerne County Visitors Bureau  
Rick Williams, Luzerne County Council  
Joyce Zaykowski, City of Wilkes-Barre, TAC  
James May, PennDOT District 4-0 Press Officer  
Marie Bishop, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming  
Steve Fisher, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning  
Anna Fuhr, PennDOT District 4-0 Administration