

LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION STUDY
TECHNICAL COMMITTEE MEETING
January 3, 2018

Members of the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Committees:

Attached is a copy of the minutes of the Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Technical Committee meeting, held on January 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) Technical Committee was held on Wednesday, January 3, 2018 in Conference Room 233 of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation District Office in Dunmore, Pennsylvania.

Mr. Steve Pitoniak, Chairman of the Technical Committee, called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and asked for self-introductions.

Mr. Pitoniak stated for the record that in accordance with the provisions of the Sunshine Law and Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act, he submitted the required public meeting notice, which appeared in local papers.

ITEM #1 – OCTOBER 4, 2017 LLTS COMBINED TECHNICAL AND COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES

Copies of the October 4, 2017 Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Combined Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting minutes were sent out to all committee members and are available on the LLTS website. It was noted that on page 7 under the Airport Master Plan, New York City should be New York State. Mr. Pitoniak asked for further additions, deletions or corrections. Hearing none, a motion to approve the October 4, 2017 Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Combined Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting minutes with the noted change was made by John Pocius, seconded by Susan Hazelton and carried.

ITEM #2 – 2017-2020 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) MODIFICATIONS

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

- Adding right-of-way phases to MPMS 8259 - Shady Lane Arch in Lackawanna and to MPMS 103653 - SR 4015 over Crooked Creek in Luzerne
- Decreasing construction phases on MPMS 91214 - SR 11 and SR 239 Paving in Luzerne and MPMS 93033 - SR 2036 over Mill Creek in Luzerne to low bid amounts
- Advancing the construction phase from FFY 18 to FFY 17 and converting funds to 100% state on MPMS 7838 - Harrison Avenue Bridge in Lackawanna County
- Increasing construction phase to process work orders on MPMS 9165 - County Road #16 over Huntsville Creek in Luzerne
- Increasing final design phase in FFY 18 to process a supplement on MPMS 8868 - SR 3014 over Nescopeck Creek in Luzerne
- Adding the study phase in FFY 18 to process the agreement for a series of bridges on SR 309 over Toby Creek in Luzerne (MPMS 97942, 94743 and 56623)
- Adding the study phase FFY 17 to MPMS 97941 - SR 309 over SR 8039 Ramp in Luzerne
- Increasing preliminary engineering phase on MPMS 7924 - T-309 over Lehigh River to process a supplement
- Adding right-of-way phase for the negotiated claim settlement on MPMS 9223 - Coal Street Realignment in Luzerne

Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Modifications continued:

- Adding final design phase and construction phase in FFY 18 to MPMS 8239 - SR 307 over I-81 northbound in Lackawanna
- Adding preliminary engineering phase to FFY 18 on MPMS 110327 - SR 309 Signal Corridor in Luzerne
- Adding right-of-way phase in FFY 18 for MPMS 102011 - SR 315/2017 Intersection Improvement in Luzerne per claim estimate
- Increasing the construction phase on MPMS 89012 - SR 309 over SR 2004 and Railroad in Luzerne to the low bid amount
- Adding construction phase in FFY 18 per estimate on MPMS 110384 - SR 3020 Linden Street Emergency Bridge repairs in Lackawanna
- Increasing the final design to process a supplement on MPMS 9079 - SR 93 over Nescopeck Creek in Luzerne
- Adding right-of-way phase in FFY 18 for MPMS 95263 - Drinker Street Northbound Exit Signal in Lackawanna per claim estimate
- Adding right-of-way phase in FFY 18 for MPMS 67470 - SR 1038 over Obendorfers Creek in Luzerne per claim estimate

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

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

ITEM #3 – UPCOMING TIP PROJECTS

Mr. Chapman noted that there are 15 projects set to let dates in the first quarter of 2018 (seven projects in Lackawanna and eight projects in Luzerne). All the projects are resurfacing projects except one and the projects included:

Lackawanna

- SR 3015 Old Forge (Main Street, Moosic Road and Oak Street) - let March 15, 2018
- SR 3017 Old Forge (Bridge Street and Main Street) - let March 15, 2018
- SR 2008 Throop in Lackawanna (Marshwood Road and Sanderson Street)
- SR 8031 Wrong Way Ramp Upgrade on the North Scranton Expressway northbound at the Keyser Avenue Off Ramp - let March 29, 2018
- SR 3024 in Moosic (Main Street) - Let March 15, 2018
- SR 1019 (Wayne Street and Salem Avenue) in Carbondale and Jefferson Township - let March 15, 2018
- SR 3019 in Old Forge (Spring Street and Lonesome Road) - let March 15, 2018

Luzerne

- Federal Aid Paving (SR 1009 Market Street, Mountain Boulevard, Wilkes-Barre Township Boulevard, Spring Street and Kidder Street) in Hanover, Wilkes-Bare and Plains Townships, the City of Wilkes-Barre, and Ashley and Kingston Boroughs - let March 1, 2018
- SR 415 Harvey's Lake (Memorial Highway and Lakeside Drive) - let March 15, 2018
- SR 1415 Harvey's Lake (Lakeside Drive) - let March 15, 2018
- SR 0011 (Salem Boulevard and South Main Street) - let March 15, 2018

Upcoming Projects continued:

Luzerne

- SR 0011 (East Front Street and Salem Boulevard) - let March 15, 2018
- SR 309 in Ashley Borough (Mountain Boulevard) - let March 1, 2018
- SR 3021 in Butler Township (Old Turnpike Road) Bridge Improvement - let March 29, 2018
- SR 115 in Bear Creek Township and Bear Creek Village Borough - let March 15, 2018

Mr. Pitoniak asked if the planned the intersection improvements for Dunmore Street and Sanderson Street and Cypress Street and Sanderson Street in Throop will coincide with the resurfacing project on Marshwood Road and Sanderson Street. Ms. Hazelton noted that the paving project is being coordinated with the intersection improvement project. The paving on Sanderson Street between the two one-way streets will be part of the intersection improvement project.

Mr. Frati asked for clarification on the limits of work on Spring and Kidder Streets on the Federal Aid Paving project. It was noted that the paving extends to SR 309 and that detailed information is available and will be provided.

Mr. Pitoniak asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Scranton and Wilkes-Barre Downtown Bicycle Network Study.

**ITEM #4 – SCRANTON AND WILKES-BARRE DOWNTOWN
BICYCLE NETWORK STUDY**

Mr. Chapman noted that the Department for Community and Economic Development (DCED) awarded the MPO \$54,400.00 for the Scranton and Wilkes-Barre Downtown Bicycle Network Study. It was also noted that the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) is in process to award the MPO \$75,000.00 for the Scranton and Wilkes-Barre Downtown Bicycle Network Study. Mr. Chapman thanked Mr. Butch, Mr. Pitoniak, Mr. Ferry and Mr. Manseau for all their help in attaining this funding. Mr. Ferry noted that this was a collaborative effort with Lackawanna County taking the lead on the grant application that benefits both the City of Scranton and the City of Wilkes-Barre. Mr. Pitoniak noted that once the official documentation and hope to get the study underway late summer or early fall this year. The study will take approximately three or four months with the first phase completion by January 2019. Looking to have recommendations added to the next round of TIP updates. The first phase of the study will encompass Scranton and Wilkes-Barre downtown areas and once these areas have been covered the next phase will expand the study out throughout the counties.

Mr. Williams asked if the study will look at one-way and two-way vehicle traffic. It was noted that the MPO is looking at incorporating a pedestrian study in the bicycle network study and have polled the University of Scranton for funding and are looking to see if Wilkes and Kings would participate in funding also. The study will not look at reversing traffic or changing traffic patterns on the streets but look at typical areas, projects where improvements are needed as traffic systems are reviewed for bicycle right-of-way and pedestrian movements.

Mr. Pitoniak asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – MPO Freight Program Assessments.

ITEM #5 – MPO FREIGHT PROGRAM ASSESSMENTS

Mr. Smoker noted that since the passage of MAP-21 in 2012 the FHWA has been utilizing the Freight Program Assessments for a better understanding of the statewide and nationwide freight activities; this is the third round since 2012. This is for FHWA to get an understanding of how the MPOs are handling freight, some have stand-alone freight committees and what they are doing to incorporate freight movement into the planning process. It is a 24-question assessment to demerging best practices as well as levels of funding and training still needed. This is done every other year between the Planning Organizations this year and the DOTs (PennDOT) next year, etc. The MPO Freight Program Assessment should be complete by the end of the month. It was noted that there is a freight meeting scheduled in two weeks after the LLTS Coordinating Committee meeting. Mr. Pitoniak noted that in the early days of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) there was good representation of the various industries including: trucking and warehousing in the area, but attendance has waned over the years. The committee was asked to provide information for transportation contacts from these industries to ask for their participation not only with the Freight Program Assessment but also as members of the TAC.

Mr. Pitoniak asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Transit Consolidation Study.

ITEM #6 – TRANSIT CONSOLIDATION STUDY

Mr. Ferry noted that a meeting was held with the two counties and three transit authorities at the Luzerne County Transit Authority (LCTA) Office for the Transit Consolidation Study. Numerous stakeholders in attendance provide a lot of input; the counties and transit authorities have been tasked to determine how the consolidation will be framed in the region. Options include: consolidation of the transit authorities under one office, keeping the transit authorities under one office as separate entities, and keeping the transit authorities as separate entities working cooperatively by providing / sharing services.

Mr. Gavlick reiterated Mr. Ferry's options and that the consensus was leaning to a full consolidation of the transit authorities. Currently, PennDOT is working with a consultant to determine cost savings for transit consolidation for recommendations of improvements or changes that can be made in the transit organizations. A meeting will be set with the transit authorities and the consultant to review in detail where savings can be realized and how much the savings would be so the County Commissioners and City Councils will have an idea of what may be realized in actual savings.

Savings are funds being spent now that would not be spent if the transit authorities are consolidated. For example, an unfilled position does not count because money is not currently being spent on an unfilled position. Once the cost savings analysis is complete the transit authorities would be looking at match funding in savings for each county expenditures over a 5-year plan (currently, the transit authorities would be looking for savings up to what expenditures

are: Lackawanna has approximately \$600,000.00 in funds, Luzerne has approximately \$500,000.00 in funds and the City of Hazelton has approximately \$150,000.00 in funds).

It was noted that this first phase is not looking at operational services (facilities, unions, busses). The study is looking administrative savings at the management level. Mr. Williams asked if the unions have been made aware of the consolidation study for possible changes in the future. It was noted that the original study was set for only administrative savings review. PennDOT is looking to amend the contract with the consultant to look at operational savings. There are not many differences between the operations and needs with LCTA and County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS) as the drivers and mechanics have the same unions, but the transit agencies have different unions for their shared ride operations. Hazelton Public Transit (HPT) is contracted privately and does not have a union for their drivers.

It was noted that Lancaster's Transit Consolidation is with two separate entities under an umbrella organization, because the individual transit authorities had different and separate unions. COLTS and LCTA have different local unions, but the unions are under the same business agent. The push and pull for operational changes would be in the shared ride operations, LCTA operations are under local teamsters' union and COLTS has a different union for their shared ride operations also. Meetings will be set with union leaders once the figures from the study are available. LCTA is hoping to have the cost analysis and recommendations prior to the contract renewal with the union January 1, 2019.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that the steering committee for the consolidation study emphasize the importance of ensuring that the Luzerne County Council and Lackawanna Planning Commission have the figures from the study for merger approvals, since the counties, PennDOT and the Federal Transit Authority (FTA) provide funding. The actual cost saving figures are needed to determine what would be involved with the consolidation, what would be required for the counties and transportation agencies to provide funding.

It was also noted that COLTS and LCTA Boards do not officially have a vote on the consolidation. The transit authorities will be consulting on the decision, but the Lackawanna County Commissioners, the Luzerne County Council and the City of Hazleton's Council will be making the final decision on the consolidation. Current money saving efforts from the last study between the transit authorities and efforts being made moving forward will not count as cost savings in the upcoming Transit Consolidation Study since the savings will have already been realized. (For example: LCTA and COLTS are taking steps to program the bus fare boxes to match fare and bus pass costs and working with HPT to add fare boxes; as well as entering an arrangement to contract shared services like compliance officer services and marketing).

Mr. Pitoniak noted that there has been good representation at the committee meetings already held for the consolidation study attendance included the counties, the transit authorities, PennDOT and other interested parties.

Mr. Roberts asked if there was a timeline for completion of the study. It was noted that after the work orders are in for the consultant to move forward the entire study would start in

approximately three months, and be completed by mid to late summer. The next step will be to look at the cost savings and determine what measures to take to achieve the savings.

Mr. Kelly noted that quantifying the savings beyond the current efforts in place for consolidation is a daunting task. The next step would be to identify how those savings can be separated in the legislative bodies or boards and over the next five years. It was noted that this would be part of the type of consolidation chosen as the agencies move forward. Mr. Kelly commended the transit authorities on the consolidations they are currently working on as well as the high level of efficiency being maintained even though they share unique services instead of filling positions at each agency to supply those unique services independently.

Mr. Gavlick noted that the LCTA and COLTS currently share their best practices; for example, LCTA just finished its transit asset management plan a couple months ago, which is also a year ahead of time. LCTA received accolades from FTA and PennDOT which has the document on their websites for peer review. Noting LCTA shares these items with COLTS as well as other peers. The transit asset management plan can be utilized by other transit authorities as a template to complete their plans also.

Mr. Pitoniak asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, the committee moved to the next order of business – Transportation Alternative (TA) Set Aside Funding.

ITEM #7 – TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVE (TA) SET ASIDE FUNDING

Mr. Pitoniak noted that as a large MPO, the MPO is allocated separate funding to do transportation alternative actions in the Lackawanna / Luzerne County area. LLTS applications go to PennDOT Central Office for review to ensure the applications are properly filled out and that the projects fall within the funding guidelines. PennDOT Central Office sends the applications back to the MPO to interview the applicants and score the applications for priority ranking. The TAC scores the applications and recommend funding from the top priority project to end of the project submission rankings. The committee tries to fund at least one project from each county. Last year LLTS had additional funding available from projects that came in under budget or were not completed.

Mr. Chapman noted that there were 15 applicants from Lackawanna and Luzerne Counties and 13 applicants made presentations. The Lackawanna River Heritage Trail - Marvine Section had the top score of 40 and will be funded \$800,000 out of the \$1.4 million. The next highest score was the Pedestrian Bridge Connector: Trail to Steamtown with a score of 36; since the committee strives to have a project in each county this project will be prioritized on the list to be submitted for the statewide allocation in this round of TA Set Aside Funding. The next highest ranked project is the Updated Bus Stop Signage for Safety and Wayfinding presented by LCTA with a score of 35 and it will be fully funded for \$240,000. The remaining \$360,000 will go to the fourth ranked project, the Wilkes University Pedestrian Safety Improvements with a score of 33. This project will be partially funded, as the request was for over \$1 million. The Wilkes University Pedestrian Safety Improvements will be the second priority on LLTS statewide submission since it is partially funded.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that the applicant rankings will be submitted for the statewide allocation of the TA Set Aside Funding allocation. The applications from each region are looked and ranked on a statewide level. One of the criteria LLTS asks of the applicants is if the project can be phased to help with funding availability and to be able to utilize other funding sources wherever possible.

Mr. Pocius asked what would get a project a higher ranking over another project. It was noted that this year not only were there five-minute presentations, but also five-minute question sessions for each application, which allowed the committee to clarify items like if a project is shovel ready, if there is additional funding available, how it fits into the regional and statewide networks, etc. Items such a sidewalk as a standalone project are not eligible for the TA Set Aside funding. Sidewalks are the responsibility of the municipalities and do not fall within the funding guidelines. Projects can include sidewalk improvements but they would be part of a trail restoration and other out of the ordinary projects. The committee usually looks at if the project will have an economic and regional benefit to the area. For instance, the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail - Marvine Section that was funded, is the missing link for bicycle commuters utilizing the existing trail from Carbondale to Scranton.

Mr. Pitoniak asked for further questions or comments. Hearing none, a motion for the Technical Committee to recommend to the Coordinating Committee to approve the funding of the three Transportation Alternative Projects as ranked by the TAC was made by John Pocius, seconded by Butch Frati and carried.

ITEM #8 – SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Mr. Pitoniak noted that the new transportation acts that have gone into effect over the last few years have required MPOs to come up with their own safety performance measures; projects and initiatives to improve traffic safety on the highway network and pedestrian network to eliminate serious injuries and deaths. MPOs can create their own criteria and methods for these measures, or adopt the PennDOT safety targets for the performance measures. Mr. Smoker noted that FHWA set the measures and the MPOs and the states set the targets for the safety performance measures. It was noted that there is a glitch in the measurement system and the current target goals for the MPO are already below where the performance measure target goals. It was noted that the data glitch is due to each state having varying definitions of what constitutes a serious injury and how fatalities are counted / applied within the measure. The data collection issues will be corrected to reflect appropriate performance measure targets once the state departments of transportation utilize FHWA definitions nationwide.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that the packet of information sent out for the Technical Committee meeting includes a chart of the baseline number of fatalities for the Scranton / Wilkes-Barre area from 2012 through 2016 is 55.6 and the target is 53.2; currently, the MPO is showing the need to reduce fatalities by 3.4 fatalities per thousand. The serious injury baseline is 146.4 and the target is 172 which would require an increase in injuries to meet the target. Mr. Pitoniak noted that this reflects the glitch in the past of the data collection and how the data is being looked at moving forward.

Mr. Pitoniak asked for further questions or comments. Hearing none, a motion for the Technical Committee to recommend to the Coordinating Committee to adopt the PennDOT targets for the Safety Performance Measures was made by Norm Gavlick, seconded by James Ferry and carried.

ITEM #9 – TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) MEMBERS

Mr. Pitoniak noted that the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) is made up of representatives of various transportation users and transportation entities. The committee consists of members, whose demographics included low to moderate income representatives, elderly representatives, environmental representatives, trucking representatives, representatives of non-vehicle modes of transportation, as well as representatives from other industries. The MPO works to maintain the TAC with 20 to 25 members (at least 10 from each county). There is no formal process to being added to the committee; anyone showing interest is welcome or if there is an area lacking representation the MPO members will outreach to people in those areas. It was noted that two new members have requested to join in Lackawanna County (Christine Dettore of DCNR and Stephani Milewski of a private engineering firm). Luzerne County has received notice of interest from a disability advocate and from a representative of the Latino Community in the Hazleton area. The MPO is reaching out to the freight industry and looking at architectural engineering field to be a part of the TAC.

It was noted that the TAC needs an individual or a couple individuals to organize committee meetings and ensure the meetings are held on a regular basis to keep the committee engaged and informed instead of scheduling meetings just for project rankings, application scoring for the various funding programs and updating the Long Range Plan (LRP), etc. The committee was meeting on a quarterly basis, but as membership has waned, it has only been meeting when updates are being made. LLTS is looking to get the TAC membership increased so it would be able to form subcommittees to be more involved in the planning processes.

Mr. Pitoniak asked the Technical Committee and today's meeting attendees to review the current TAC listing on the MPO website and if they see a niche that needs to be filled or knows someone who wants to get involved; contact himself or Mr. Ferry so they can formally add members to the committee. Membership is open and the MPO is looking to formally add the members through Technical and Coordinating committees this April. Mr. Ferry added that reaching out to the younger generation is a key part to bring in their perspective and technical methodology to planning. Mr. Ferry also asked everyone to reach out to potential committee members and provide contact information to the MPO to bolster the TAC and improve the diversity and quality of the committee.

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

ITEM #10 – OTHER BUSINESS

2019 TIP Update

Mr. Smoker asked where the LLTS is with the 2019 TIP Update. It was noted that the 2019 TIP Update is under review and that there is a conference call set with Central Office in early February for project prioritization for the region and ensure Central Office knows the region's agenda and work plan. The update reflects the movement of projects that have continuing phases and removing completed projects. It was noted that not many additions have been made to the 2019 TIP.

Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Committee

Mr. Pocius noted that the Governor had appointed him to the Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Committee which serves as the advisory committee to the State Transportation Commission. Attending his first meeting this past December, Mr. Pocius noted that the statewide committee studies various type projects or areas that are recommended for PennDOT to look at. From the past meeting one recommendation was to look at the extension of rail between various municipalities and another recommendation was to look at the State Police Funding. The experience from the regional planning is a good crossover to the statewide planning, and Mr. Pocius will be able to bring the regional point of view and ideas to the statewide commissions at future meetings.

LCTA Property Acquisition

Mr. Gavlick noted that LCTA is in the process of acquiring the Murray Complex with a tentative timeline for groundbreaking in the spring, with a move anticipated in the fall of 2019. There are five parcels, approximately 13 acres being acquired. LCTA will be building new headquarters and consolidating its operations. The new facility will incorporate both an internal and retail compressed natural gas (CNG) stations for fueling. There will be a public filling station as well as notification to the municipalities of the availability of a local CNG filling station. Moving 170 employees from Kingston to the City of Wilkes-Barre. LCTA will be receiving its first two brand new CNG busses by end of this summer but looking to get an additional five this year depending on funding grants.

Part of the long-term thinking for the new site where it sits on railroad tracks that eventually would connect to Lackawanna County's intermodal center, could be changed to become a single road with bicycle lane connected to it and dedicated solely to busses. This Bus Rapid Transit Line would not allow any other type vehicle on the roadway and the current railroad crossing could be converted to bus stops. LCTA will be meeting with the Redevelopment Authority for conveying their land that includes the railroad bed over to the transit authority to be able to have control of the easements to get to the tracks. This would require a study that could be looked at as an alternate to expanding I-81 or putting trains in which may cost as much to remove the track and build the roadway. The transit authorities already have the vehicles and the drivers, this would provide the roadway for a bus rapid transit line between Wilkes-Barre and Scranton Downtowns. Mr. Pitoniak noted that the LRP does incorporate bus rapid transit so this is not

foreign to what the MPO has been looking at over the past years. It was also noted that Pittsburgh has a similar set up in areas and the automatic gates are utilized where the rails had roadway crossings for passenger boarding and departures. Since this would fall under transit in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) there may be an avenue to request supplemental funding with a proposal to incorporate a study.

Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Smoker asked where the LLTS is with the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) update. It was noted that the MPO will be reviewing and making updates within the next month to complete.

Long Range Multimodal Study - I-81 Congestion

Mr. Williams noted that a multimodal traffic study needs to be completed on Interstate 81. The study needs to take in account at least a 20-year timeframe. A study would not only look at the traffic and widening the interstate but the geographical issues to get truck traffic off the interstate and put it on rail. It was noted that 46% of the traffic on I-81 are trucks which is considerably higher than what is on I-80. The need to expand a study would need to look beyond geographical and legislative issues and with Panama Canal being widened, the concern is that will also lead to a further increase in truck traffic. This also should be related to how this affects the big box stores and industrial parks which need to be included in the study for the rapid bus transit lane and rail use and alternates.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that a side from the stretch of I-81 in the Carlisle area, the stretch of I-81 in the LLTS region is the most truck traffic on I-81 in the state. It was also noted that with the widening of the Panama Canal and the deepening of ports in New York and Philadelphia the region will see a lot more truck traffic. Mr. Williams noted that planning needs to be looking at getting this increase on rail even if benefits are not realized for another 30 years. It was noted that the next LRP update within the next year will include a large component looking at truck traffic.

Mr. Williams asked if this would be a separate study not only looking at the rail infrastructure but also the laws and legislation that manages and governs the rail operators that seem to be archaic in coordination with Luzerne County and the regional rail authority. Since the current coordination system seems to be part of the barrier to getting the rails into the industrial parks and big box stores. Will the zoning boards and planning commissions be able to craft the guidelines and regulations to get the rail sidings into the industrial parks and big box stores?

It was noted that the LRP update does not go into the legislative initiatives, but if the additional study could be incorporated depending on funding allocations from FHWA. Mr. Smoker noted with the freight issue this could be something that could be tackled by the Statewide TAC mentioned by Mr. Pocius. This could be a statewide study from the Carlisle area from I-81 to I-83 to I-78 to the turnpike to Philadelphia. Mr. Smoker noted that as he drives the interstate regular it seems it would be difficult to get rail sidings into industrial parks and big box distribution centers; citing the I-81 in Schuylkill County since many of those facilities are where

I-81 runs. A study would have to encompass a truck origins, destinations and what they are carrying to understand the freight needs. Much of this information is available from FHWA but for a comprehensive study it would be best to have a statewide study completed that may include surrounding states with ports and their freight movement.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that 20 to 30 years ago, when planning developments, the proposals leaned toward not incorporating rail access and now, the region needs to incorporate more rail access because the roadways cannot handle the freight. There is a similar situation with industrial parks and office parks in Philadelphia which were developed in the 50's, 60's and 70's for single occupancy cars not considering transit. Now they are looking trying to get transit into the office parks. LLTS see this at Center Point in Pittston with no sidewalks or central office center where a transit hub could be added to efficiently service the area. It was noted that in Philadelphia they are looking at bringing transit oriented hub to their office parks by bringing in restaurants, hotels and banks into the parks and linking them to the outlying office and industrial buildings with walking paths. The suggestion was reiterated that this would be a good recommendation to be included in a study at the statewide Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Committee.

Meeting Schedule

The next Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for April 4, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

The next Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for April 18, 2018 at 10:00 a.m.

Adjournment

Mr. Pitoniak asked for questions or comments. Hearing none, a motion to adjourn the LLTS Technical Committee meeting was made by Norm Gavlick, seconded by John Pocius and the meeting adjourned at 11:20 a.m.

Lackawanna-Luzerne Transportation Study Technical Committee Meeting Attendance
January 3, 2018

Voting Members Present:

Steve Pitoniak, Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission, Tech. Comm. Chair
Susan Hazelton, P.E., PennDOT District 4-0 Design
Dean Roberts, PennDOT Central Office Planning
Gerard Babinski, PennDOT District 4-0 Bridge
Tanis Manseau, Luzerne County Planning and Zoning
Norm Gavlick, Luzerne County Transit Authority
Attilio "Butch" Frati, City of Wilkes-Barre, Permanent Proxy for Mayor Anthony George
Alan Baranski, Northeast Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA), Permanent Proxy for Jeff Box
John Pocius, LaBella Associates, Permanent Proxy for Scranton Mayor William Courtright
Gary Cavill, Greeman Pedersen, Lackawanna County Engineer
Jim Ferry, Luzerne County Planning Commission

Non-Voting Member Present:

Matt Smoker, FHWA

Non-Members Present:

Chris Chapman, Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission
George Kelly, Lackawanna County Department of Planning and Economic Development
Rick Williams, Kingston Township
John Petrini, Lackawanna County
Michael Sullivan, PennDOT District 4-0 ESTI
Julianne Lawson, P.E. PennDOT District 4-0 Design
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
Emma Pugh, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming
Anna Fuhr, PennDOT District 4-0 Administration