

# Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO

## Transportation Study

### Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting

April 21, 2021 1:00 pm  
Minutes

1:10 Steve Pitoniak opened the meeting.

#### 1. Public Comment

Discussion of items not on the agenda. No public comment was offered.

#### Action Items

##### 2a. Approval of February 3rd Combined Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Pitoniak asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the February 3rd minutes. John Pocius moved to approve the February 3rd minutes. Second by Sue Hazelton. Motion carried.

[February 3<sup>rd</sup> Combined Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes](#)

Mr. Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the February 3rd Minutes. Butch Frati moved to approve the February 3rd Minutes. Second by Alan Wufsus. Motion carried.  
LLTS MPO Feb 3 minutes

##### 2b. Current TIP and Actions

Steve Fisher stated the TIP and Actions were distributed prior to the meeting and these are the highlights of the included projects that were added:

1. Construction phase of State Route 690 over Bear Creek
2. Demolition portion of the 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue Bridge
3. Lackawanna County Act 13 bridges
4. Research phase of MS4 projects
5. Final design phase of SR 4023 spillway at Griffin Reservoir
6. Planning and research phase MS4 inspections
7. Preliminary Engineering phase of Game land banking in agreement with District 3
8. Advanced significant paving projects in Luzerne County

**(The above projects are listed for information purposes only)**

[Current TIP](#)

[Actions](#)

Sue Hazelton explained that the Land Banking is used by PennDOT to mitigate game land taken for a project with an exchange or credit of land from another district.

Matt Smoker had commented on project money; there was a clarification by Mr. Fisher that some de-obligations were not specified in the TIP items and this was the source of additional funds.

### **2c. LCTA Transit Amendment MPMS #115456**

Dean Roberts noted that LCTA wants to utilize \$3.5M of section 5339 funds before they lapse for use in the administration facility. The amendment is needed as the request is in excess of \$3.0M threshold.

[LCTA Transit Amendment MPMS #115456](#)

Mr. Pitoniak asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the LCTA transit amendment MPMS #115456. Butch Frati moved to approve the LCTA Transit Amendment MPMS #115456. Second by John Pocius. Motion carried.

Bob Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the LCTA Transit Amendment MPMS #115456. Rich Roman moved to approve the LCTA Amendment. Second by Matt Jones. Motion carried.

### **2d. Regional Freight Plan**

Mr. Pitoniak explained that the MPO has been working with the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study, Lebanon County MPO, NEPA MPO and Reading Area Transportation Study on a Regional Freight Plan and the steering committee is preparing a supplemental request for financial support from PennDOT. The committee had a series of meetings. The estimated cost of the study is \$300K to \$350K with an 80/20 partnership. A consultant would be hired to undertake the study. The estimated shared cost would be in the range of \$60K to \$70K spread across the 5 entities, cost to \$14K to \$17K per entity.

[Regional Freight Plan](#)

Mr. Pitoniak asked the Technical Committee to allow the chair of the Coordinating Committee to sign the resolution for a local match of up to \$17K for a supplemental request for financial support in the amount of \$350K with the provision that the local funding would come from the MPO. The work would be reimbursable through State and Federal grants under the Unified Planning Work Program. Sue Hazelton moved to approve the Resolution for the Technical Committee. Second by John Pocius. Motion carried.

Bob Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the Resolution for supplemental funding. Butch Frati moved to approve the Resolution. Second by Brenda Sacco. Motion carried.

## **3. Discussion Items**

### **3a. PennDOT Pathways**

Rich Roman discussed the shortfalls in current revenue streams from current user fees, road taxes and fuel taxes. He presented alternatives to funding road and bridge projects. There was a discussion of alternatives to funding the projects. Ideas include bridge tolling, mileage based fees, congestion pricing, corridor tolling and increased fees and taxes. Mr. Jones thanked Mr. Roman for his presentation and

noted that Luzerne County Council recently passed a policy resolution opposing the State’s proposal that two bridges be tolled in Luzerne County (and three bridges in Northeast Pennsylvania overall).

[PennDOT Pathways](#)

[Resolution to oppose the implementation of Act 88 of 2012 P3 Program regarding tolling of bridge on Pennsylvania Interstates especially Luzerne County](#)

### **3b. Spring Project Commencement**

Chris Chapman presented an overview of the upcoming let projects.

Four projects for this quarter:

1. Bridge Rehabilitation on SR 407 over Lackawanna Lake, bordering Benton Township and North Abington Township
2. SR 309 Intersection Improvement at Johnson Street and Blackman Street Plaza, Business Route 309 in Wilkes Barre Township
3. Wilkes University Pedestrian Safety Improvement, Wilkes-Barre City
4. State Route 307 over Green Run Bridge Replacement in Roaring Brook Township

[Spring Project Commencement](#)

### **3c. Extension of Valley View Drive in Jessup/Archbald**

Aaron Whitney from SLIBCO explained the options for the extension of Valley View Drive. There are issues of traffic and emergency service access. In 2009, PennDOT extended Valley View Drive from SR 247 at the 911 Center through the Valley View Industrial Park, a \$23M project. Option 1 is the “red” option, an extension of Valley View Drive in Jessup to the Archbald Business Park in Archbald Borough. The road would extend 6,400 feet to join the existing tunnel under Route 6 with one-way traffic through the tunnel and then continue to Power Boulevard with an estimated cost of \$14M. Option 2 is the “blue and red” option extending over Laurel Run from Salem road, about 8,600 feet, across Archbald Business Park. Salem Road would become a high volume driveway with traffic signals and turning lanes at Salem Road at a cost of \$26M. Option 3, the “green” option, similar to Option 1 and includes the “red” route and a new tunnel with two-way traffic and turning lanes and signals, at an estimated cost of \$21M.

Mr. Pitoniak noted that the road extension is not in the current LRTP; it would have to be added to the TIP and the TYP, so it is for information purposes at this time. Mr. Jones asked if there are any public/private partnerships for this type of project. Rich Roman stated that the developers may be responsible for contributing to this type of project through the HOP process. A Traffic Impact Study would be necessary.

[Extension of Valley View Drive in Jessup/Archbald](#)

### **3d. Update on the Bylaws and Committee Structure**

Mr. Pitoniak acknowledged help from Chris Chapman and the staff of PennDOT district 4-0 in the update process. The original organization structure has not been changed since 1965. The group is looking at one administrative committee with 15-17 members and a number of sub committees.

**5 Subcommittees:**

Highway/ Bridge  
Freight  
Transit  
Environmental  
Multimodal

The subcommittee structure will be up to the members.

**Preliminary Admin committee membership would be:**

One representative from each County  
One representative from each Planning Commission  
Chair from each sub committee  
One representative from 2 municipalities in both counties  
Two representatives from PennDOT District 4-0  
One representative from PennDOT Central Office  
One representative from FTA or FHWA

Mr. Pitoniak then opened up the discussion and asked for input on the upcoming bylaws committee meetings. Rich Roman said he will have his team members involved with the meetings. Bernie McGurl expressed interest in public involvement and environmental issues. Dean Roberts offered his input and support.

Matt Smoker also offered his support.

**3e. West Broadway Street Bridge – West Nanticoke**

Chris Chapman introduced the bridge project details: a county owned bridge with traffic of 6-7K per day is nearing the end of its useful life. The bridge is not on the TIP. Senator Yudichak noted that the West Nanticoke bridge project will tie in to the South Valley Parkway that is also nearing its traffic limits. There is a preliminary agreement with an undisclosed developer in the area of Nanticoke. The bridge replacement, estimated at a cost of \$40M, would be important to economic development and enhanced emergency service access. The program proposal is similar to the “Restore Pennsylvania” program. Senator Yudichak is looking at using \$3M of Luzerne County LSA money over 25 years to leverage a bond issue that would generate \$58M to move the Bridge project forward. A partnership with Luzerne County, proposing use of an anticipated \$500M federal stimulus package of funding and the expected \$500M TIP funding will help the MPO with TIP and non-TIP items. The Senator estimates that \$83M will be available for bridge work and approximately \$38M for additional road work. The plan would look for a partnership with a federal infrastructure plan. The program might be called Restore Luzerne County.

Butch Frati commented that project approach is an innovative idea. Matt Jones commented that the MPO would have to vote on this project to add it to the TIP and the LRTP. Chris Chapman commented that this is for informational purposes at this time. There is more work to be done regarding the bridge; there have been meetings with Senator Yudichak’s office to assemble more details of the project.

### **3F. Member Designated Projects (MDPs)**

Mr. Pitoniak stated the House Transportation Committee is considering a new Transportation Bill to replace the continuing resolution. In this process, the House is looking at directly funding MDPs, or what have been known as “Earmarks”. Congressman Matt Cartwright’s office solicited project ideas that are that are on TIPs and long-range plans and have the possibility of local match funding. Staff came up with project that fit the various parameters provided, and checked with PennDOT district staff to help verify the viability of the projects. The following were identified as the projects the counties would like to see advanced with MDP funds:

#### **In Lackawanna County**

Green Ridge Street Bridge over the Lackawanna River in the City of Scranton \$9.6M, federal share \$7.68M.

Main Street Corridor from “the anchor” monument to the Archbald/Blakely Line is a county owned roadway. The sub base is brick roadway from the old Providence Turnpike; it will be a full depth restoration: \$1.9M, federal share \$1.52M.

#### **In Luzerne County**

Crestwood Drive Road Resurfacing in Wright Township to \$1.5M, federal share \$1.2M.

Church Road Resurfacing in Wright Township \$2.4M, federal share \$1.92M.

Lower Demunds Road Resurfacing in Dallas Township \$1.5M, federal share \$1.2M.

Sleepy Hollow Road Bridge Replacement in Butler Township \$1.5M, federal share \$1.2M.

Congress wanted these project ideas to be TIP ready and able to be completed within 4 years. Mr. Jones mentioned that the speculated timing of the proposed bill in Congress would see it passed and signed into law in 2022. Mr. Pitoniak stated that there was about 10 days to assemble the projects to be sent on to the Congressional office, so staff did a lot of work quickly.

### **Progress Reports**

#### **4a. Scranton and Wilkes Barre Bicycle Pedestrian Network Plan**

Mr. Chapman said that the bike/ped study had recently been completed and there will be a bike/pedestrian group in the new sub-committee structure, which may help get the projects moving forward and educate the public. The completed study is available on the LLTS website here:

<https://www.lltsmpo.com/documents-resources/>

#### **4b. PennDOT Connects Updates**

Steve Fisher said that PennDOT is moving forward to the next phase of PennDOT Connects. There will be information provided at the next MPO meeting.

#### **4c. Upcoming MPO Meetings**

Upcoming meetings are still planned to be virtual unless otherwise announced in the future.

July 28<sup>th</sup>, 2021 @ 1PM

October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2021 @ 1PM

## **Other Business**

Mr. Pitoniak reported on a recent virtual meeting in Fell Township with PennDOT and Township officials to discuss the Intersection of Main Street (SR 171) and Jefferson Street (SR 1003), near Frank's Place. Circumstances at the site recently changed: one property at the intersection had burned and two properties have been razed. There are options to improve the intersection: relocation of the intersection; widen the intersection; or do intersection improvements. Sue Hazelton commented that they are looking at right-of-way acquisition and a determination if a contractor is needed or whether PennDOT crews will do the work and small design. They will coordinate with Fell Township in the process.

Alan Wufsus commented on a possible location for a Park and Ride in Butler Township in the area of Route 309 and Sand Springs. A traffic light is proposed for this intersection and this would allow access and to vacant land that would lend itself to a parking area and have easy access with the proposed traffic signal. Mr. Pitoniak suggested that information should be gathered by the MPO in this area. Rich Roman asked that any correspondence regarding this item go through Sue Hazelton for this project.

Sue Hazelton mentioned that a section of State Route 632 in Lackawanna County is closed. A corrugated pipe is failing and a permanent replacement is funded by the MPO and in design and this would be about 1 ½ years out to replace. An emergency repair is in place with a concrete slab to be placed over the pipe with the plan of reopening in about one month pending availability of materials.

Matt Jones expressed thanks to PennDOT and Marie Bishop for their assistance in determining the viability for the MDPs to be submitted for the proposed federal transportation stimulus.

Mr. Pitoniak asked, if there is no other business, for a motion to adjourn from the Technical Committee. John Pocius moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Sue Hazelton. Motion carried.

Mr. Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to adjourn. Rich Roman moved to adjourn the meeting. Second by Alan Wufsus. Motion carried.

**LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION  
STUDY MEETING  
MPO TECHNICAL-COORDINATING COMMITTEES  
April 21, 2021**

<b><u>COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</u></b>	<b><u>MEMBER PRESENT</u></b>	<b><u>ABSENT &amp; NO PROXY</u></b>	<b><u>PROXY PRESENT</u></b>
<b><u>PENNDOT</u></b>			
Richard N. Roman, District 4-0 Office	X		
Kristin Mulkerin, Central Office	X		
<b><u>LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u></b>			
<i>Vacant</i> (Board of Commissioners)			
Brenda N. Sacco, Director of Planning & Economic Development	X		
<b><u>LUZERNE COUNTY</u></b>			
C. David Pedri, County Manager, Committee Chair (Matthew Jones, Executive Director of Luzerne County Planning & Zoning – Permanent Proxy)			X
<b><u>CITY OF HAZLETON</u></b>			
Jeffrey L. Cusat, Mayor - (Alan Wusfus, Hazleton City Engineering Technician - Permanent Proxy)			X
<b><u>CITY OF SCRANTON</u></b>			
Paige Cognetti, Mayor - (John Pocius, LaBella Associates - Permanent Proxy)			X
<b><u>CITY OF WILKES-BARRE</u></b>			
George Brown, Mayor - (Attilio "Butch" Frati, Director of Operations - Permanent Proxy)			X
<b><u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE - LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u></b>			
Robert Fiume, COLTS Director, Committee Vice-Chair	X		
<b><u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE - LUZERNE COUNTY</u></b>			
Lee Horton, LCTA Interim Executive Director - (Kathy Bednarek, LCTA Grants Coordinator - Permanent Proxy)	X		

**AVIATION REPRESENTATIVE**

Carl Beardsley, Wilkes-Barre/Scranton International Airport  
Director X

**\*PA NORTHEAST REGIONAL RAILROAD  
AUTHORITY**

Larry Malski, President X

**\*FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**

Matt Smoker, Community Planner X

**\*FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)**

Timothy Lidiak, Project Manager X

**\*FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

Lori Pagnanelli, District Office Manager X

**\*SENATOR BLAKE'S OFFICE (LACKAWANNA)**

Larry West, Regional Director X

\* Non-Voting Member

**LLTS Technical Committee Members Present:**

Steve Pitoniak,  
Lackawanna County Regional Planning Commission, Committee Chair  
Dean Roberts,  
PennDOT Central Office, Committee Vice-Chair  
Susan Hazelton,  
PennDOT District 4-0 Assistant District Executive for Design  
Brenda Sacco,  
Lackawanna County, Director of Planning and Economic Development  
Barbara Idhaw  
Lackawanna County, Engineering Consultant, Greeman-Pederson, Inc.



Chris Chapman,  
Luzerne County, Transportation Planner  
John Pocius,  
Proxy for Scranton City Mayor, Paige Cognetti, Engineering Consultant, LaBella Associates  
Lee Horton  
Luzerne County Transit Representative, LCTA  
Stephen Mykulyn,  
Lackawanna County Aviation Representative  
Matt Jones,  
Executive Director, Luzerne County Planning and Zoning  
Ralph Sharp  
Proxy for Mayor Cusat, Hazleton Public Transit Director  
Matt Smoker,  
FHWA Community Planner  
Jay Schectman  
Luzerne County, Transportation Planner  
Butch Frati,  
Proxy for Wilkes-Barre Mayor  
Gerard Babinski,  
PennDOT District 4-0  
Alan Baranski  
Permanent Proxy for Jeffrey Box, NEPA Alliance President/CEO

**LLTS Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Members Present:**

Janet Sweeney, Pennsylvania Environmental Council  
Denise Corcoran, ARCIL  
Stephanie Milewski, North Pocono Trails Association  
Bernie McGurl, Lackawanna River Corridor Association  
Shane Novak, Luzerne County Planning Commission  
Vivian Williams, Scranton Area Community Foundation  
Aaron Whitney, Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce

Theodore Wampole, Executive Director, Luzerne County Convention & Visitors Bureau  
Keith Williams, NEPA Center for Independent Living  
Owen Worozbyt, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Association  
Gary Jordan, Kings College

**Non-Members Present:**

Steve Fisher, PennDOT District 4-0  
Marie Bishop, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming  
Julianne Lawson, PennDOT District 4-0 Planning and Programming  
John Petrini, PennDOT District 4-0  
Tina Bauman, Lackawanna County Planning  
Kathy Bednarek, LCTA  
Jessica Edwards, Luzerne County Planning  
Joe Corcoran, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Association  
Mike Taluto, PennDOT District 4-0  
Kate McMahon, NEPA Alliance  
James Brady, STC  
Jessica Kalinoski, PennDOT District 4-0  
Frank Summa  
John Yudichak, Pa State Senate, District 14