

Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO
Transportation Study
Technical and Coordinating
Committee Meeting
April 20th, 2022
Minutes

1:03, Dean Roberts opened the meeting.

Chris Chapman requested a moment of silence for Jay Schectman, the Luzerne County Transportation Planner who passed away in March.

Mr. Roberts noted that, per the Sunshine Act requirements, the meeting and agenda was advertised in the Scranton Times, Citizens Voice and Hazleton Standard Speaker and the meeting time and agenda were posted on the LLTS MPO website.

Mr. Roberts said that a request for access for public comment had been received from officials for the city of Carbondale, and Mr. Chapman added that several representatives from Mericle were present at the meeting.

Mr. Chapman noted that there was a proxy, Tom Reilly, Jr. of Reilly Associates, for Scranton Mayor Paige Cagnetti.

Mr. Chapman then conducted roll call for Coordinating Committee, Technical Committee, TAC Committee and non-members present.

1. Public Comment

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

2. Action Items

2a. Approval of Jan. 26th Combined Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the Jan. 26th meeting minutes. Matt Jones moved to approve the Jan. 26th minutes, seconded by Sue Hazleton. The motion carried.

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the Jan. 26th meeting minutes. Butch Frati moved to approve the Jan. 26th minutes, seconded by Brenda Sacco. The motion carried.

[January 26th LLTS MPO Minutes](#)

2b. Current TIP and Actions

Steve Fisher stated the TIP and Actions were distributed prior to the meeting and highlighted the following projects:

- Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase for SR 3016 slide
 - Right of Way (ROW) phase for Elm Street Bridge
 - PE phase for SR 2005, Luzerne County
 - Final Design phase for SR 2013 over Meadow Brook
 - ROW phase for Parker Street Bridge
 - Final Design phase for SR 3006 over Gardner Creek
 - Construction phase for SR 339 resurfacing
 - Construction phase for I-81 and I-80 delineator project
 - Final Design phase for SR 1005 over Becker's Creek
 - Final Design and ROW phases for SR 690 over Van Brunt Creek
 - Bid on bridge preservation project in Lackawanna County
- (The above projects are listed for information purposes only.)**

Mr. Fisher noted that the Hanover Industrial Estates Multimodal Improvements Project will require an amendment to add ARC Appalachian Regional funds to the project.

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the amendment. Mr. Frati made the motion, seconded by Barbara Idhaw. The motion carried.

Robert Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the amendment. Richard Roman made the motion, seconded by Alan Wufsus. The motion carried.

[Current TIP](#) and [Actions](#)

2c. Reaffirmation of Two TIP Amendments

Mr. Chapman explained two TIP amendments that went out after the January 26th meeting, due to the passage of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law:

- MPMS #116593 I-80, I-81, I-30 Ground Mounted Delineator
- MPMS #118201 I-81 High-Friction Surface Ramps

Mr. Fiume asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the amendments to the TIP. Mr. Roman made the motion, seconded by Mr. Wufsus. The motion carried.

3. Discussion Items

3a. IIJA/BIL

Matt Smoker provided a brief overview of the new BIL. He explained that the core existing federal aid funding programs remain intact, and will be increased by the BIL. Additionally, the FHWA will be administering several new funding programs through state departments of transportation, including a bridge program, a carbon reduction program, and several discretionary programs that will be rolled out through Notices of

Funding Opportunities (NOFO). Three such programs are already active, with applications due May 23rd: INFRA, a mega-projects program for projects of significant size, and a rural projects program.

He also provided links to further information on the BIL:

[US DOT](#), [FTA](#), [FHWA](#), [FHWA Policy Framework](#), and [upcoming funding opportunities](#).

Mr. Roman spoke about PennDOT's efforts to inform municipalities and local organizations about the BIL and highlight upcoming projects, including several press events and presentations to the Scranton and Greater Wyoming Valley Chambers of Commerce. He said that the LLTS MPO is slated to receive \$109 million over the next five years for highways and bridges from the BIL.

Mr. Roman added that competitive grants are also available. He specified that there will be applications windows each year of the five-year BIL for a variety of projects ranging from highways to EV charging stations, mine reclamation, airport infrastructure, and others.

3b. Spring Project Commencement

Mr. Chapman presented an overview of the upcoming Let projects with five projects for this quarter:

- MPMS # 100487 SR 632 over Tributary Lily Lake
- MPMS # 97932 SR 4023 over Spillway Griffin Reservoir
- MPMS # 106323 I-81 Mill/Fill Dickson City to Susq. County Line
- MPMS # 118201 I-81 Ramps High Friction Surface
- MPMS # 114919 Interstate 81 Cable Median Barrier

[Spring Commencement Projects](#)

3c. Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) Projects

Mr. Chapman presented the update. TASA awards for 2022 were announced, with three projects in Lackawanna County and two in Luzerne County receiving funding.

In Lackawanna County:

- 1) Borough of Archbald: \$330,000 to install new concrete curbs and sidewalk along the section of Columbus Drive from Valley View High School and Valley View Intermediate School.
- 2) Dickson City Borough: \$1.2 million to complete construction of the multimodal Dickson City Main Avenue Plan providing improved bicycle, pedestrian, and existing bus-service access.
- 3) Lackawanna Heritage Valley Authority: \$300,000 to close a gap in the Lackawanna River Heritage Trail by creating an alternative transportation corridor that will provide for safe passage of pedestrians and cyclists from the main street.

In Luzerne County:

- 4) City of Pittston: \$1 million to extend the Riverfront Trail to the North Main Street Neighborhood in Pittston City and create ADA improvements and safety features including lighting and pedestrian signage.
- 5) Hanover Township: \$1 million to grade and surface the railroad alignment of the former Lehigh Valley Railroad between Mountain Top and Laurel Run Borough with rail to trail improvements.

[TASA Awards](#)

3d. 7th Avenue Bridge, Carbondale

Mary Liz Donato explained that the city of Carbondale has two bridges in need of repair that aren't included on the TIP or in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and is looking for guidance on receiving funding.

Michelle Bannon, Carbondale City Clerk, described the state of the bridges and reiterated that outside funding was needed to perform repairs.

Mr. Chapman noted that the 7th Avenue Bridge had been discussed by the MPO previously and informed Ms. Bannon of possible grant opportunities, such as the Multimodal Program, with an application window through DCED open until July 31st and another with PennDOT later in the year. Matt Jones added that the project could also be added to the upcoming Long-Range Transportation Plan update in 2025.

4. Progress Reports

4a. 2023-2026 TIP Update & Schedule

Mr. Chapman noted that the TIP Update draft was distributed with the meeting agenda. The air quality conformity analysis is complete and the MPO will receive the documentation shortly. The Environmental Justice (EJ) activities are being streamlined. Once the air quality documentation and EJ activities are finished the draft TIP will go out for the 30-day public comment period, currently on track for mid/late May and into June, so public comment will be complete before the next MPO meeting on July 6th.

[2023-2026 Draft TIP](#) and [2023-2026 TIP Schedule](#)

4b. Scranton and Wilkes Barre Bicycle Pedestrian Network Plan

Mr. Chapman contacted the previous steering committee and advisory committee members to gauge interest in continuing to advance the plan. He stated that he intends to organize a meeting with representatives of both Scranton and Wilkes Barre, MPO staff, PennDOT staff, and any other interested parties in order to begin implementing the plan.

[Scranton Wilkes-Barre Bike & Pedestrian Plan](#)

4c. PennDOT Connects

Mr. Fisher said that PennDOT District 4-0 will hold a municipal outreach meeting on Friday, April 22nd. Thirty-one people had reserved an in-person spot, with another ten planning to attend virtually. He added that the meeting will kickstart the District's Connects Program for the spring, with projects being pulled from the TYP after the outreach.

4d. Update of Bylaws and Committee Structure

Mr. Chapman said that district staff and staff from both counties have reviewed the MPO bylaws and found several inconsistencies regarding membership tenures and replacements. He stated that the bylaws had been

reworked to correct those inconsistencies and that he hoped to have a meeting in the coming months to review the changes. Additionally, the changes to the bylaws will restructure the MPO down to one committee, with one to three subcommittees.

[Draft Bylaws LLTS MPO](#)

4e. Eastern PA Freight Alliance (EPFA) Freight Study

Mr. Chapman stated that interviews for the consulting firms that had submitted proposals for the freight study would be held on April 28th, and that he would notify the committee members of the interview results afterwards. He assured the Committee members that each MPO involved in the freight study had scored the candidates separately before combining scores with the other MPOs, and that each MPO had an equal voice in the process.

4f. Upcoming MPO Meetings

The upcoming meetings will be available with both an in-person and a virtual component.

All meetings are at 1:00 PM unless otherwise noted:

- July 6th, 2022
- October 5th, 2022

Other Business

Mr. Chapman said that the current plan is for future meetings to be hybrid, but virtual-only meetings were possible if circumstances required it. He asked for feedback on the hybrid set-up used in the current meeting.

Mr. Wufsus informed the Committees that Butler Township is requesting emergency vehicle access to Interstate 81 from Butler Drive in order to remove significant detours when responding to calls from certain areas. Mr. Roman responded that the request would have to be made to FHWA. Ms. Hazleton added that she was familiar with a similar request for access to I-84, which she confirmed had required federal permission.

Mr. Wufsus said that he is retiring in the near future and has asked the Hazleton mayor to appoint a new proxy. The Committees thanked him for his service to the MPO.

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion to adjourn from the Technical Committee.

Ms. Hazleton moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Chapman. The motion carried.

Mr. Fiume asked for a motion to adjourn from the Coordinating Committee.

Mr. Roman moved to adjourn the meeting, seconded by Mr. Wufsus. The motion carried.

**LACKAWANNA-LUZERNE TRANSPORTATION
STUDY MEETING
MPO TECHNICAL-COORDINATING COMMITTEES**

April 20, 2022

<u>COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEMBERS</u>	<u>MEMBER PRESENT</u>	<u>ABSENT & NO PROXY</u>	<u>PROXY PRESENT</u>
<u>PENNDOT</u>			
Richard N. Roman, District 4-0 Office, Committee Vice-Chair	X		
Kristin Mulkerin, Central Office	X		
<u>LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			
<i>Vacant</i> (Board of Commissioners)			
Brenda N. Sacco, Director of Planning & Economic Development	X		
<u>LUZERNE COUNTY</u>			
Romilda Crocamo, Esq., Acting County Manager (Matthew Jones, Executive Director of Luzerne County Planning & Zoning – Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>CITY OF HAZLETON</u>			
Jeffrey L. Cusat, Mayor - (Alan Wufsus, Hazleton City Engineering Technician - Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>CITY OF SCRANTON</u>			
Paige Cognetti, Mayor - (Tom Reilly Jr., Reilly Associates- Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>CITY OF WILKES-BARRE</u>			
George Brown, Mayor - (Attilio "Butch" Frati, Director of Operations - Permanent Proxy)			X
<u>TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE - LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			

Tim McGrath, COLTS Director

X

TRANSIT REPRESENTATIVE - LUZERNE COUNTY

Robert Fiume, LCTA Director, Committee Chair

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, Innovative Finance & Planning Implementation
Manager

X

***FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)**

Timothy Lidiak, Project Manager

X

***FEDERAL AVIATION ADMINISTRATION**

Lori Pagnanelli, District Office Manager

X

*Non-Voting Member

LLTS Technical Committee Members Present:

Dean Roberts,

PennDOT Central Office, Committee Chair

Susan Hazelton,

PennDOT District 4-0 Assistant District Executive for Design, Committee Vice-Chair

Gerard Babinski,

PennDOT District 4-0 District Bridge Engineer

Brenda Sacco,

Lackawanna County, Director of Planning and Economic Development

Barbara Idhaw,

Lackawanna County, Engineering Consultant, Greenman-Pederson, Inc.

Chris Chapman,

Luzerne County, Transportation Planner

Mary Liz Donato,

Lackawanna County Planning Department Manager

Tom Reilly, Jr.,

Proxy for Scranton City Mayor, Paige Cognetti, Engineering Consultant, Reilly Associates

Attilio "Butch" Frati,

Proxy for Wilkes-Barre Mayor, George Brown, Director of Operations

Michael Danchek,

County of Lackawanna Transit System (COLTS)

Stephen Mykulyn,

Lackawanna County Aviation Representative

Alan Baranski,

Permanent Proxy for Jeffrey Box, NEPA Alliance President/CEO

Matt Jones,

Executive Director, Luzerne County Planning and Zoning

Ralph Sharp,

Proxy for Mayor Cusat, Hazleton Public Transit Director

Matt Smoker,

FHWA Innovative Finance & Planning Implementation Manager

LLTS Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Members Present:

Stephanie Milewski, North Pocono Trails Association

Denise Corcoran, ARCIL

Gary Jordan, Kings College

Janet Sweeney, PA Environmental Council

Alan Stout, Luzerne County Convention & Visitors Bureau

Owen Worozbyt, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Association

Patrick Williams, Clarks Summit Resident

Non-Members Present:

Steve Fisher, PennDOT District 4-0
Emma Pugh, PennDOT District 4-0
Kate McMahon, NEPA Alliance
Jessica Ruddy, PennDOT District 4-0
John Petrini, PennDOT District 4-0
Joe Corcoran, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Association
Michael Grantner, STV
Robert Kenney, Lackawanna County Planning Department
Mike Taluto, PennDOT District 4-0
William Stone, Luzerne County Planning Department
Kevin O'Boyle, Mericle
Michele Bannon, Carbondale City
Nirmesh Patel, PennDOT
Jessica Edwards, Lackawanna County Planning Department
Bryan McManus, Mericle
Carey Mullins, PennDOT Central Office
Mark Grochocki, Senator Yudichak's Office