

Lackawanna/Luzerne MPO

Transportation Study

Technical and Coordinating

Committee Meeting

April 9th, 2024
Minutes

At 1:07pm, Dean Roberts opened the meeting.

Mr. Roberts noted that, per the Sunshine Act requirements, the meeting and agenda were advertised in the Scranton Times, Citizens Voice, and Hazleton Standard Speaker and the meeting time and agenda were posted on the LLTS MPO website more than 24 hours prior to the meeting.

1. Public Comment

Mr. Roberts asked if there were any comments. There were no public comments.

2. Action Items

a. Approval of the January 9, 2024, Combined Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the minutes from the January 9th meeting. Susan Hazelton made a motion to approve the minutes, seconded by Matt Jones. The motion passed.

Rich Roman asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the minutes from the January 9th meeting. The motion was made by Carl Beardsley and seconded by Tom Reilly. The motion passed.

b. 2023 TIP and Actions

➤MPMS 9128 – SR 115 over I-81

Emma Pugh presented an update regarding MPMS 9128- SR 115 over I-81. Ms. Pugh stated that there would be a construction cost increase and there will need to be a vote.

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the amendment. The motion was made by Gerard Babinski, seconded by Barbra Idhaw. The motion passed.

Mr. Roman asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the amendment. The motion was made by Mr. Reilly and seconded by Romilda Crocamo. The motion passed.

c. Adding the Nanticoke/West Nanticoke Bridge to the TYP

Ms. Crocamo gave a presentation regarding the West Nanticoke Bridge. The presentation covered the history of the structure, and the issues and complications that have arisen. There have been

corrosion issues and there is a need for further inspection that must be considered. Ms. Crocamo stated that the West Nanticoke bridge has been identified as a critical public safety issue. There are also vital impacts that should be considered for first responders. There is significant evidence that the bridge has major corrosion issues. There will also be great impact on local business, Ms. Crocamo stated that there are 91 businesses within one mile of the bridge.

➤ **West Nanticoke Bridge Benesch Overview**

Dominic Yannuzzi and John Knecht presented the West Nanticoke Bridge project for Benesch. The existing structure layout was covered along with the inspection history. The bridge will require frequent inspections due to priority one concerns. There will be a right-hand turning lane proposed in the future as well. Mr. Yannuzzi stated that three alternatives were considered including rehabilitation, partial replacement, and relocation. There have been many considerations added to the report while analyzing the possible alternatives. Mr. Yannuzzi continued, presenting the cost comparison considering all three alternatives.

Mr. Roman stated that this is a major project that needs to be addressed. Mr. Roman clarified that the project would take up to three years before project completion. Mr. Roman stated that the three-year time frame is aggressive, and he suggested that the project remain on TYP for the year 2029 until an alternative is chosen with the available funding.

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to move the West Nanticoke Bridge on the TYP draft program for \$5,000,000 in 2029 and \$5,000,000 in 2031 with a local match contribution for construction. The motion was made by Mr. Jones, seconded by Ms. Hazelton. The motion carried.

Mr. Roman asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to move the West Nanticoke Bridge on the TYP draft program for \$5,000,000 in 2029 and \$5,000,000 in 2031 with a local match contribution for construction. The motion was made by Mr. Reilly, seconded by Mr. Roberts. The motion carried.

d. Approval of the 2024 Congestion Management Process

➤ **LLTS MPO CMP Presentation**

Brian Funkhouser presented the CMP plan. Mr. Funkhouser stated that there is a need for the CMP to be integrated into the planning process, including the LRTP and many others. Some of the components included in the CMP were congestion trends, bottlenecks, processes, and ongoing monitoring. The steering committee included 19 members and focused on breaking down data and collaboratively planning to best address issues while updating the CMP. There has been a lot of new data that has been made available which is very helpful for processing new data and helping to see impacts of new projects. Mr. Funkhouser also presented the new mapping system that shows the congestion data which will help evaluate system performance moving forward. Priorities were determined by multiple factors that helped to determine the key priority areas that needed to be addressed. Future updates to the CMP will be coordinated with PennDOT.

Mr. Jones stated that the MPO staff had been working closely with Michael Baker to identify priority areas. Mr. Jones also asked that an amendment be made to the CMP on page 21 and 22. Mr. Jones stated that it may be better to add complete web addresses and county planning staff contact information. Mr. Jones also asked to add that Luzerne County is working with PennDOT to have better signage for the Fort Jenkins Bridge.

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the CMP with pending amendments. Mr. Jones made the motion, seconded by Ms. Hazelton. The motion carried.

Mr. Roman asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the CMP with pending amendments. The motion was made by Mr. Reilly, seconded by Ms. Crocamo. The motion carried.

e. Approval of the 2024 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan

Emily Webb provided a presentation covering the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan. This plan will help the MPO meet federal requirements as well as helping transit authorities apply for funding. Existing demographic and transit conditions were taken into account while drafting the plan. Stakeholder and public outreach were also a crucial part of the planning process. Ms. Webb gave a breakdown of the service groups and common issues impacting those who have difficulty accessing the public transit system.

Mr. Roberts asked if there were any requirements regarding updates to the Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan. Ms. Webb stated that there is a mandate to have the plans, however, it was not known if there are required updates although it certainly will help.

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to approve the 2024 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan. A motion was made by Ms. Bednarek, seconded by Mr. Jones. The motion passed.

Mr. Roman asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to approve the 2024 Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Plan. The motion was made by Ms. Crocamo, seconded by Mr. Reilly.

f. TIP Reaffirmation

➤ **MPMS 121375: SR 309 High Friction Surface**

Mr. Roberts stated that the Coordinating Committee will need to re-affirm MPMS 121375: SR 309 High Friction Surface.

Mr. Roman asked for a motion from the Coordinating Committee to re-affirm project MPMS 121375. The motion was made by Ms. Crocamo, seconded by Mr. Reilly. The motion carried.

3. Discussion Items

a. Spring Project Commencement

- **MPMS 106314 - Elm Street Bridge over Lackawanna River**
- **MPMS120931 - North Main Avenue Demolition**
- **MPMS 115883 - SR 3011 Keyser Avenue Wall Replacement**
- **MPMS 9191 - SR 435 over Lackawanna County Railroad Authority**
- **MPMS 109778 - SR 435 over Roaring Brook**
- **MPMS 94567 - SR 348 Intersection Improvement**
- **MPMS 119235 - SR 309 Luzerne County Resurfacing - 2023**
- **MPMS 121375 - SR 309 High Friction Surface**

- **MPMS 9128 - SR 115 over I-81**
- **MPMS 67443 - I-81 Dorrance Bridges**

Eric Middleton presented the spring project commencement for all projects in Lackawanna County, and Robert Manzella presented the spring project commencement for all projects in Luzerne County.

b. Scranton-NYC Corridor Identification and Development Program

Larry Malski gave an update on the Scranton NYC corridor. Mr. Malski stated that the application was submitted and accepted. This program is running through the Bipartisan Infrastructure funding that was made available through the US DOT. There has also been designated funding assigned to the project. Mr. Malski stated that there is much more work to be completed, but there will be stops on the rail line in Scranton, Mt. Pocono, and East Stroudsburg. This schedule was the initial release from an Amtrak proposal. It is estimated that there will be a train running two times per day along the designated corridor. Mr. Malski stated that there will be more reports to come soon.

c. Fall Planning Partners

Mr. Roberts stated that the Fall planning partners meeting will likely be at the Penn stater in September, hopefully this will be a two-and-a-half-day conference again.

d. MPMS 121385 – Gordon Avenue

Mary Liz Donato stated that the K-route discretionary funds were being looked at in reference to the Gordon Avenue project. Frank Summa presented the mapping and data that shows the work area. Mr. Summa stated the issues which included cracking on the roadway along with other roadway surface concerns. Mr. Summa stated that his proposal includes entire resurfacing and restriping along the entire segment. The proposal also includes \$1,000,000 in K-route funding as the total construction cost.

e. Carbondale – 7th Ave and Spring Street over Raquet Brook bridge repairs

Ms. Donato stated that a letter was received looking for funding from the City of Carbondale. There has been an issue regarding travel across Raquet Brook Bridge. There has been discussion about adding the project to future plans, and funding has been applied for through grant programing. To be considered for funding, the project will need to be listed on the active TIP.

f. Lackawanna County Economic Development Study for Montage Mountain

Kristen Magnotta stated that this project has been listed on the Lackawanna County Commissioners agenda for approval. This study looks to engage with the public, developers, stakeholders, and other local government officials. The purpose of this study is to examine what possible improvements can be made to make access to Montage Mountain easier. There will also be discussions moving forward to come up with alternative routes and funding opportunities. This study is expected to take up to a year or hopefully less. It is expected that this report will provide opportunities for better transportation practices.

g. Pittston Township Park and Ride Transfer Station Proposal

Kathy Bednarek provided an update on the Pittston Township Park and Ride transfer station proposal. Ms. Bednarek states that the park and ride will provide a great connection and allow for traffic reduction bridging the LCTA and COLTS routes. This will also be helpful due to the proximity of local hospitals and medical centers. Ms. Bednarek also made it known that this will be located on PennDOT property.

h. LCTA Transit Development Plan Public Comment Period

Ms. Bednarek stated that the LCTA Transit Development Plan public comment period would begin later in the month. This will hopefully give better visibility to the plan.

i. Funding/Grant Opportunities

Jonathan Shaw provided information about grant and funding opportunities that have been made available. The Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP) is open with a first round including planning projects, as well as implementation projects that will be covered within the funding parameters. The application round will close in June 2024.

Mr. Shaw stated that the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant program is entering the third year of its funding cycle. Mr. Shaw also stated that both Lackawanna and Luzerne counties have been awarded funding for planning projects through this program in the past.

Mr. Shaw provided information about the PennDOT Automated Red Light Enforcement program (ARLE). This program is designed to improve roadway safety including mobility, traffic signal improvements, and biking safety.

j. Safe Streets and Roads for All [SS4A] Awards

Ms. Donato stated that Lackawanna County has released an RFP for the SS4A grant that was received. Lackawanna County has formed a committee to review the proposals from the four consulting companies that responded to the release RFP.

Mr. Shaw stated that Luzerne County is finalizing the grant agreement between Luzerne County and FHWA.

k. Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update

Mr. Jones provided an update on the LRTP. Mr. Jones stated that the current goal is to publish the updated LRTP by February of 2026. This is the first time that the MPO may be able to add and update new projects to prioritize projects as needed. The SS4A plans may also be drivers for ideas to update the new LRTP. The Luzerne County council has agreed to fund the initial cost with Lackawanna County reimbursing 50% of the total cost.

4. Progress Reports

a. PennDOT Connects

John Petrini stated that there would be a municipal outreach session held on May 7th for all who are interested. Mr. Petrini stated that the registration is still open and encouraged everyone interested to sign up and attend the session.

b. Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Update

Mr Roberts stated that FHWA would like it known that the MPO operates under two separate contracts, one for Lackawanna County, and one for Luzerne. Mr. Roberts stated that he would enter the COLTS transit projects and expects a few weeks to receive the air quality reports.

c. LCTA Microtransit Update

Ms. Bednark provided an update regarding LCTA microtransit. Ms. Bednarek stated that LCTA is working to contract a microtransit service and will have a roundtable discussion. Ms. Bednarek stated that she would provide information and updates for the microtransit initiative moving forward.

d. Eastern PA Freight Alliance Freight Study

Ms. Donato stated that a draft was received for the Freight Study. There will be meetings in the future. Mr. Shaw added that the only update is just that the draft is still being reviewed at this time.

e. 2024 LLTS MPO Hybrid Meeting Schedule:

- **July 9th, 2024**
- **October 8th, 2024**

Mr. Roberts asked if there were any objections to the proposed MPO meeting times on July 9th and October 8th. There was no objection.

5. Other Business

Mr. Roberts asked if there was any other business to discuss. No other business was mentioned.

6. Adjournment

Mr. Roberts asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to adjourn, motioned by Mr. Jones, seconded by Ms. Hazelton. The motion carried.

Mr. Roman asked for a motion to adjourn. The motion was made by Ms. Crocamo, seconded by Mr. Roberts. The motion carried.

The meeting was adjourned at 3:14pm.

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

April 9th, 2024

<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 (Dean Roberts, PennDOT Central Office-Proxy)			
<u>LACKAWANNA COUNTY</u>			
Bill Gaughan (Board of Commissioners)			
Kristin Magnotta, Director of Planning & Economic Development	X		
<u>LUZERNE COUNTY</u>			
Romilda Crocamo, esq. - (Matthew Jones, Executive Director of Luzerne County Planning & Zoning – Permanent Proxy)	X		
<u>CITY OF HAZLETON</u>			
Jeffrey L. Cusat, Mayor - (Joshua Esposito, 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 - (Mark Barry, 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**

Gene Porochniak, Community Planner X

***FEDERAL TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION (FTA)**

Timothy Lidiak, Project Manager X

***DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY AND ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT**

Chris Chapman, Local Government Policy Specialist X

LLTS Technical Committee Members Present:

Dean Roberts,

PennDOT Central Office, Transportation Planning Manager

Susan Hazelton,

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

Gerard Babinski,

PennDOT District 4-0 District Bridge Engineer

Kristin Magnotta,

Lackawanna County, Director of Planning and Economic Development

Barbara Idhaw

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

Mary Liz Donato,

Lackawanna County Planning Department Manager

Tom Reilly, Jr.,

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

Mark Barry,

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

Kathy Bednarek,

Luzerne County Transportation Authority, (LCTA) Grants Coordinator

Stephen Mykulyn,

Lackawanna County Aviation Representative

Alan Baranski, Proxy Kate McMahon

Permanent Proxy for Jeffrey Box, NEPA Alliance President/CEO

Matt Jones,

Executive Director, Luzerne County Planning and Zoning

Ralph Sharp,

Proxy for Hazleton Mayor Cusat, Hazleton Public Transit (HPT) Director

Larry Malski,

PA Northeast Regional Rail Authority

LLTS Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) Members Present:

Aaron Whitney, Greater Scranton Chamber of Commerce

Christine Dettore, DCNR

Denise Corcoran, ARCIL

Non-Members Present:

Annie Butkiewicz, Michael Baker
Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker
Casey Bottiger, Michael Baker
Danyel Patrick, Michael Baker
Deron Jordan, Michael Baker
Dominic Yannuzzi
Emily Webb, Michael Baker
Emma Pugh, PennDOT District 4-0
Eric Middleton, Lackawanna County Transportation Planning Manager
Frank Summa
James Hazen, Lackawanna County Economic Dev.
Jennifer Andes
Jennifer Pecora, Luzerne County Engineer
Jessica Edwards, Lackawanna County Regional Planning Manager
Joe Corcoran, Lackawanna Heritage Valley Association
John Knecht
John Petrini, PennDOT District 4-0
Josh Carlson, PennDOT district 4-1
Julianne Lawson, PennDOT District 4-0
Mary Roselle
Michele Bannon
Michele Sparich
Nick Vough
Paul Dunay, Lackawanna County Planning
Robert Manzella, Luzerne County Planning
Sandi Opshinski, Lackawanna County Economic Dev.