

Meeting Minutes for February 11th, 2010
Transportation Technical Committee Meeting
Regional Enterprise Tower - Pittsburgh, PA

Attendees:

- Lynn Heckman, Allegheny County Economic Development
Steve Shanley, Allegheny County Department of Public Works
- Darin Alviano, Armstrong County Planning Commission*
- Arthur Cappella, Fayette County Planning Commission*
- Jeff Raykes, Indiana County Planning Commission
- Chris Bova, Westmoreland County Planning Department
- Patrick Hassett, Pittsburgh Department of Public Works
Patrick Roberts, Pittsburgh Department of City Planning
Deborah Suci-Smith, FHWA*
- Kevin McCullough, PennDOT Central Office*
Dave Cook, PennDOT District 10-0*
Brian Allen, PennDOT District 10-0*
Doug Dupnock, PennDOT District 10-0*
Tim Jublunovsky, PennDOT District 10-0*
Dan Cessna, PennDOT District 11-0
Rob Miskanic, PennDOT District 11-0
Joe Sczur, PennDOT District 12-0*
William Kovach, PennDOT District 12-0*
Domenic Sacchetti, PennDOT District 12-0*
Stacey Rabatin, PennDOT District 12-0*
Angela Saunders, PennDOT District 12-0*
Mavis Rainey, Oakland TMA
Liz Tillman, Oakland TMA
Lynn Manion, Airport Corridor Transportation Management Association
Lucinda Beatty, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership
Chuck DiPietro, SPC Staff
Chuck Imbrogno, SPC Staff
Domenic D'Andrea, SPC Staff
Sara Walfoort, SPC Staff
Matt Pavlosky, SPC Staff
Doug Smith, SPC Staff
Ryan Gordon, SPC Staff
- (Indicates Voting Member)
- * Indicates participation via conference call

1. January 14th, 2009 TTC Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)

Chuck DiPietro called the meeting to order at 10:05 a.m. and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. Chuck asked everyone to introduce themselves; there were 13 people who were on conference call. The January 14th 2009 meeting minutes were approved with no changes.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. Action on Amendments and Modifications to the 2009 to 2012 TIP

The current administrative action and amendment procedures are attached following these meeting minutes.

a.) PennDOT District 10-0 (**Attachment B**)

Tim Jublunovsky of PennDOT District 10-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 10-0 had seven amendment requests this month.

- U.S. 119 Home North PM – add project and construction phase to the current TIP for \$1,664,869
- Mt. Chestnut Bridges - add project and construction phase to the current TIP for \$2,800,000
- McConnell’s Mills Bridge – add construction phase of the project to the current TIP for \$8,000,000.
- Baum Pump Station – add project and PE phase of the project to the current TIP for \$220,000.
- McBride Bridge Southbound – add construction phase of the project to the current TIP for 2,600,000
- South Two Lick Bridge – add PE phase of the project to the current TIP for \$325,000.
- Gahagan Bridge – add PE phase of the project to the current TIP for \$325,000.

Jeff Raykes questioned Tim about the changes involved in the SR 217 Railroad Bridge cost estimate. Tim responded that through coordination with the railroad they have obtained approval to remove the beam structure on the bridge, which has essentially corrected the clearance issue and allowing the cost estimate to go down dramatically.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 10-0 amendment and administrative action requests to the TIP.

b.) PennDOT District 11-0 (**Attachment C and District Handout**)

Dan Cessna of PennDOT District 11-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 11-0 had one amendment request:

- U.S. 422 six structurally deficient bridge structures - Add construction phase of the project to the current TIP for \$28.55 million.

Dan Cessna elaborated that this project was possible due to the bid savings on the SR 28-A23, which created a surplus of NHS bridge funds that by special request allowed to stay in the region. Dan noted that in addition to the surplus NHS funds some STP funds were moved from a deferred betterment project. The project was deferred due to upcoming sewer line work that would have conflicted with the construction schedule.

Chuck DiPietro noted that the U.S. 422 bridges project will require public comment period and is anticipated to go to the full commission for approval in April. The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 11-0 amendment and administrative action requests to the TIP and approved the 422 bridges project contingent on the public comment period and full SPC commission approval.

c.) PennDOT District 12-0 (**Attachment D**)

Stacey Rabatin of PennDOT District 12-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2009-2012 TIP. District 12-0 had two amendment requests this month:

- Donora Webster Bridge – Add the project and PE phase to the TIP for 500,000 in FFY 2010.
- Old Brownsville Bridge – Change in MPMS number.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 12-0 amendment and administrative action requests to the TIP.

4. Port Authority Connect 09 Presentation

Due to the weather, this part of the agenda was postponed to a future TTC meeting.

5. SPC Regional Signal Program

Domenic D'Andrea reviewed the status of the SPC Signal Program. Domenic distributed a handout detailing the status of advancing each project. Domenic noted that he has executed reimbursement agreements with each of the three Districts and has completed amendments to these agreements. In addition, Domenic stated that he has completed local project agreements with a number of municipalities. Domenic stated that the preliminary engineering has progressed in a number of projects and the Districts should begin to see PE reports and invoices associated with this work. Domenic explained that final design work for these projects will occur quickly and he anticipates requesting obligation of construction funds on these projects this spring. Domenic fielded several questions that had to do with the project corridor limits for several of the signal projects on the handout. Joe Szczur asked Domenic when the District 12-0 projects are going out to bid. Domenic stated that the District 12-0 Traffic Unit would soon be receiving PE reports and that he anticipates April lettings.

6. Advance 2011-2014 TIP

a.) Revisit Amendment procedures (Attachment E)

Chuck DiPietro reviewed Attachment E, which presented both areas of potential changes/additions to the procedures for the current TIP and TTC discussion questions. Chuck pointed to the following areas to begin TTC discussion:

- The need for further definition or clarification of “Emergency” projects
- Dollar threshold for amendments versus administrative actions (proposed at \$5 million).
- Dollar threshold for administrative actions requiring TTC approval (proposed at \$1 million).
- Criteria for defining TIP amendments versus administrative actions.
- Dollar thresholds for adding and deleting new projects that can be approved by TTC versus those amendments that must go to the full Commission for approval (proposed at \$10 million).
- Major fiscal impact amendment procedures including revisiting the mandatory 30-day comment period.
- Clarify the definition of “controversial” with respect to major TIP Amendments.
- Clarify the criteria for defining “Major TIP Amendments”

Most of the TTC discussion focused on the emergency definition and expedited procedures. Chuck DiPietro reported on some research staff had conducted into other region's expedited procedures, for emergencies and actions that timing dictates must be accelerated (MPOs in York, Harrisburg, and North Jersey). Some regions are set up to do balloting via conference call and/or e-mail and the definitions of when expedited procedures can be utilized in these MPO regions are detailed in their individual TIP amendment procedures. Dan Cessna stated that as we advance design of SPC's expedited procedures, design should provide flexibility to use either phone or e-mail or a combination of both for approval of emergency TIP amendments and administrative

actions. Pat Hassett stated that he personally prefers e-mail, however acknowledged that phone may be available/usable/flexible for expedited procedures. Debra Suci-Smith stated that interactive web-based mediums such as webinars could be utilized for the expedited procedures. Chuck DiPietro stated that he is not aware of any regions utilizing the webinar technology for expedited procedures, but the addition of such language would certainly be added to enhance the effectiveness of this exception to normal amendment procedures when timing dictates it. He suggested we consider integrating include this innovative use of technology via webinars into our proposed expedited procedures.

Dan Cessna noted that we need to be careful with the definition of “emergency” may need to be termed “emergency/expedited.” Chuck DiPietro strongly reinforced Dan’s point noting that the York MPO has utilized their expedited procedures for ARRA projects last March. Pat Hassett added that perhaps making provisions in the procedures for allowing advanced approval by the TTC voting members under the emergency procedures was an option.

Joe Szczur stated that the definition of “emergency” is sensitive and that he would like the procedures to differentiate between true emergencies (such as landslides or bridge closures) from projects that require hyper-paced or expedited actions (such as ARRA). Joe believes that the procedures for true emergencies should be retained as a separate stand alone procedure because they currently work very well for the Districts. Chuck DiPietro strongly concurred with Joe’s point and stated that there may be a need for new terminology and procedures for the “expedited” projects such as those involved in ARRA or a future jobs bill.

Chuck DiPietro asked what the status of the FHWA and PennDOT MOA on STIP amendment procedures was at this time. Kevin McCullough stated that there is a draft of this MOA being circulated and discussed at Central Office, but it has not been finalized. Deborah Suci-Smith stated that she would check on the status of this draft at FHWA and e-mail Chuck and Kevin. Dan Cessna asked Deborah if there were areas in our region’s procedures that add additional steps or unnecessary time to the process that are above the minimum requirements of FHWA. Deborah noted that there are some areas that are beyond the minimum FHWA requirements; she would have to investigate a little more to provide any specifics. She stated that FHWA likes to give MPOs flexibility to have procedures tailored to specifics of the region if desired. Dan requested that FHWA conduct an analysis of the current SPC amendment procedures and provide the TTC with feedback on where SPC’s procedures could be streamlined. Chuck DiPietro noted that some regions utilize the FHWA/PennDOT STIP MOA, as is, for their TIP amendment procedures.

b.) Preliminary Draft Transit TIP

(Attachment A)

Chuck DiPietro stated that the status of the preliminary Draft 2011-2014 Title III Transit TIP is the same as the version distributed at the January TTC meeting. Kevin McCullough noted that the transit TIP is currently being added into the MPMS system. Kevin noted that the goal was to keep the transit TIP and the Highway TIP on the same schedule. Kevin noted that more detail from the county transit authorities for inclusion in the project descriptions or response to public comment may be required.

c.) January Central Office District Visits

Chuck DiPietro noted that the Program Center staff from Central Office visited each District to review the TIP update work. The specific shifts and changes in the TIP update will be reviewed at the next round of SPC-District work sessions. Kevin McCullough noted that some minor changes were made in the preliminary Draft TIP mostly through advancing projects in the out years of the TIP update to the first two years in order to utilize some surplus funds due to low-bid savings. Kevin stated that the discussions held at these meetings were very good and overall the TIPs were in good shape, but some cash flow issues remain unresolved.

Kevin stated that he has a preliminary CMAQ program, however it is likely to experience more fluctuations due to Spike decisions and what CMAQ projects are delivered in 2010. Jeff Raykes asked if the preliminary CMAQ project program will be released prior to the next round of SPC-District work sessions. Kevin stated that he would like to release the preliminary list to the CMAQ Evaluation Committee and the Districts with a major qualifier stating that it is likely that there will be significant changes in the list due to spike announcements and other factors. Chuck DiPietro noted that it will be critical to get the preliminary CMAQ program to everyone in advance of the next round of District TIP work sessions. Chuck DiPietro reemphasized Kevin's point that we don't know the amount of CMAQ funds that will be utilized by carryover projects and therefore how far down the CMAQ priority list projects will be selected. Kevin added that there are three types of status with regard to CMAQ projects: legacy, carryover, and new. Legacy projects are projects that are leftover from the previous TIPs; carryover projects are those on the current TIP in the last two years that were selected last TIP update by the CMAQ Evaluation Committee. New projects are only considered after final screening of legacy and carryover projects. Kevin stated that the first priority is to deliver the legacy projects in order to honor previous CMAQ commitments and increase the capacity to fund new projects in the future.

d.) Screening of Air Quality Non-neutral Projects (Attachment F)

Chuck DiPietro stated that today's presentation to the TTC is intended to be a primer for the next round of TIP update work sessions, which should also complete the screening of all air quality non-neutral projects. Chuck Imbrogno did a 15 minute presentation that

(Attachment A)

provided an overview of regional transportation air quality conformity. The presentation provided information about the air quality conformity process for the TIP update; detailed what conformity is, explained where conformity demonstration is required; provided detailed definitions of what projects are exempt from air quality conformity; reviewed project categories and how they relate to the TIP and LRTP. Chuck Imbrogno referenced Attachment F, which was a list of regionally significant projects for air quality conformity for the current TIP. Chuck Imbrogno stated that the projects SPC needs assistance in identifying are the regionally significant projects that are not included in the preliminary draft TIP or the current LRTP. Chuck Imbrogno noted that these projects are typically economic development projects that may not have any federal funding associated with them. Lynn Heckman suggested to Chuck Imbrogno that SPC issue a letter to her requesting a list of these economic development projects that have related new transportation construction. Pat Hassett asked if Chuck Imbrogno was comfortable providing guidance on the exempt status of a project as it pertains to air quality conformity. Chuck Imbrogno stated that if he is provided project details by the project sponsors he can determine if it is exempt from air quality conformity. Chuck DiPietro summarized that it is very important to catch all projects now prior to the start of the air quality conformity work. Chuck urged the TTC members to send any questions related to projects and air quality conformity to Chuck Imbrogno for his review.

e.) Public Involvement/PPP Outreach

Matt Pavlosky reviewed the PPP development and outreach held to date on the TIP update. Matt noted that the Allegheny County and City of Pittsburgh PPP meeting is scheduled for March 2nd at 3 p.m. at the Regional Enterprise Tower. Matt noted that invites for this meeting will be going out next week.

f.) Fourth Round of TIP Update Work Sessions

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the dates, times, and locations for the upcoming fourth round of TIP update work sessions.

7. FHWA/PennDOT Central Office Reports

a.) 2009 FHWA/FTA Pittsburgh TMA Certification Review

Chuck DiPietro distributed a handout that detailed each of the 29 recommendations that were the result of the U.S. DOT Certification Review. Deborah Suci-Smith noted that FHWA will be making a formal presentation of the findings and recommendations to the full SPC Commission on March 29th. Chuck added that staff will soon continue discussion of advancing individual recommendations through SPC's committee structure (Transit Operations Committee, Operations and Safety Committee, Pedestrian/Bike Committee).

b.) TIGER Grant Status

Deborah Suciu-Smith reported that nothing has been announced from FHWA or FTA on the recipients of the TIGER Grants, by law the announcement has to be made by February 17th. Deborah said to stay tuned to Secretary LaHood's web page on the U.S. DOT website.

c.) Tolling I-80 status

Deborah Suciu-Smith reported that the status of the application to U.S. DOT for Pennsylvania to toll I-80 is unchanged from last month and she has no additional information. Pennsylvania is currently awaiting a response from U.S. DOT on the application.

d.) First Quarter Progress Reports (Attachment G)

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the first quarter obligations summary report noting the SPC region's percentage of the statewide total for each of the funding categories. Chuck noted that we were slightly down this quarter from our normal percentage. Kevin McCullough noted that there are a lot of advanced construct projects getting going right now and it may take a little while for the obligation numbers to catch-up. Kevin noted that there are a lot of ARRA projects that will be wrapping up obligations very soon.

Kevin wanted to make everyone aware that there have been some changes to the preliminary draft interstate maintenance program. This includes some significant changes in the cash flow and delivery dates in the preliminary draft interstate TIP program. Detail will be shared at each round four TIP Update Work Sessions.

Kevin noted that the Program Center is working through the 2010 appropriations earmarks.

e.) National Scenic Byways (Attachment H)

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the attachment on PA Designated Byways, which included the contact information for each of the byways Coordinators. Chuck noted that there are four scenic byways in the SPC Region: SR 711, SR 381, U.S. Route 40, and Grandview/McArdle/Sycamore Streets in Pittsburgh.

8. Other Business

a.) February 17th - Transit Operators Committee

Chuck DiPietro noted the Transit Operators Committee will meet on February 17th at 10 AM at the Regional Enterprise Tower 23rd floor.

b.) February 23rd - Safety and Operations Committee

Doug Smith provided a preview of the upcoming Safety and Operations Committee, which will include:

- Update on PennDOT / University of Pittsburgh Freeway Ramp Management Study.
- Presentation on using Aerial Surveys for Highway Performance Measurement.
- Regional Operations Plan (ROP)
- Update Discussions on CMU Traffic 21 ITS initiatives.

c.) March 2nd – Freight Forum

Sara Walfoort reviewed the agenda for the upcoming Freight Forum Meeting. Among the items to be discussed will be the ARRA funds coming to Pennsylvania for railroad studies and railroad improvements.

d.) March 10 - Pedestrian/Bike Committee

Sara Walfoort briefly reviewed the agenda for the upcoming Pedestrian/Bike Committee meeting.

The next Commission meeting is scheduled for March 29th and the next TTC meeting is scheduled for Thursday, March 18th.

Attachment: Current TTC administrative action and amendment procedures

For general information purposes, SPC is using the following administrative action and amendment procedures:

Administrative Actions

To be considered as an administrative action a proposed change must meet the following criteria:

- Exempt from air quality testing
- Does not add or delete an existing project
- No significant change in project scope or design concept
- Maintains overall and year-to-year fiscal balance

Administrative actions may include any of the following types of changes:

- Adds a project for emergency relief purposes except those involving substantial, functional, location, or capacity changes
- Correction of a misprint or data entry error
- Addition or correction of local match funds
- Schedule change, for projects or phases in any of the first three years of the TIP
- Incidental ROW changes
- Change in the funding source
- Exempt projects

New or Deleted Phase

The technical committee can approve an administrative action to add a new phase or delete a phase if the phase cost is \$5 million or less for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project.

Line Items

The recognition/programming on the TIP of specific projects within an approved line item (i.e., betterments, rail-highway crossings, Transit Section 5310 Program, transportation enhancements, local bridges, etc.) is an administrative action as long as the line item is reduced by the same amount as the eligible project. Line item-based actions require technical committee

approval.

For a betterment line item or a rail-highway crossing line item there are no restrictions based on project cost; identification of projects of any amount can be considered as an administrative action. It is also permitted as an administrative action to remove funding from a “line item” project (betterment or rail-highway only) as long as the funds are returned to the respective line item.

Cost Changes

Changes in the cost of a project or project phase can be handled as an administrative action if the cost change is \$5 million or less. A project sponsor is permitted to make an administrative cost change \$1 million or less by reporting the change to the technical committee for informational purposes only. The technical committee must approve a cost change greater than \$1 million but less than \$5 million for a highway project. The action becomes effective when it is forwarded by the technical committee to PennDOT and FHWA or FTA.

Administrative actions do not require Federal approval but FHWA and FTA reserve the right to disallow an administrative action if it is not consistent with federal regulations or the MOU. The project sponsor must provide full documentation prior to SPC acceptance of the requested change and reflecting it on the TIP. SPC and PennDOT will work cooperatively to address and respond to any FHWA and/or FTA comments on these actions.

TIP Amendments

Any project change that cannot be processed within the rules governing administrative actions must be handled as a TIP amendment. A proposed change must be considered as a TIP amendment if it meets any of the following criteria:

- Affects air quality conformity (regardless of funding source)
- Adds or deletes a project (regardless of project cost, except for existing approved line item changes that are considered administrative actions)
- Adds a new project phase or deletes a phase that exceeds \$5 million for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project
- Creates a new line item
- Involves a major change in the project scope of work or design concept
- Changes the project selection status

New or Deleted Project

The technical committee can approve an amendment to add a new project or delete an existing project if the total cost change is \$10 million or less. Total cost changes that exceed \$10 million for a highway project or \$2 million for a transit project require approval by the Commission.

Cost Changes

For changes in the cost of an already approved project or project phase, the dollar level of the change will determine the procedures that are required for approval. Changes of \$5 million or less are administrative actions. Changes that exceed \$5 million are amendments. Cost changes of \$10 million or less can be approved by the technical committee. Changes that exceed \$10 million require approval by the Commission.

Air Quality

Amendments with an air quality impact require air quality testing and a 30-day public comment period including a public meeting before they can be presented to the Commission.

Major Fiscal Impact

Amendments with a fiscal impact that exceeds \$10 million are subject to a 30-day public comment period before they can be presented to the Commission.