

Meeting Minutes for December 9th, 2010
Transportation Technical Committee Meeting
Regional Enterprise Tower - Pittsburgh, PA

Attendees:

- Lynn Heckman, Allegheny County Economic Development
Bernie Rossman, Allegheny County Department of Public Works
Steve Shanley, Allegheny County Department of Public Works
- Darin Alviano, Armstrong County Planning Commission
- James Camp, Beaver County
- Arthur Cappella, Fayette County Planning Commission
- Kevin Gray, Greene County Planning Commission
- Pat Hassett, Pittsburgh Department of Public Works
Patrick Roberts, Pittsburgh Department of City Planning
- Jeff Leithauser, Washington County Planning Commission
- Chris Bova, Westmoreland County Planning Department
- Kevin McCullough, PennDOT Central Office
Matt Smoker, FHWA
Dave Cook, PennDOT District 10-0
Brian Allen, PennDOT District 10-0
Doug Dupnock, PennDOT District 10-0
Cheryl Moon Sirianni, PennDOT District 11-0
Victor DeFazio, PennDOT District 11-0
Rob Miskanic, PennDOT District 11-0
Jeff Skalican, PennDOT District 11-0
Dhwani Patel, PennDOT District 11-0
Joe Szczur, PennDOT District 12-0
Rachel Duda PennDOT District 12-0
Stacy Rabatin, PennDOT District 12-0
Angela Saunders, PennDOT District 12-0
Lucinda Beattie, Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership
Mary-Beth Kim, Airport Corridor Transportation Association
Tom Fontaine, Tribune Review
Chuck DiPietro, SPC Staff
Chuck Imbrogno, SPC Staff
Sara Walfoort, SPC Staff
Karen Franks, SPC Staff
Matt Pavlosky, SPC Staff
Dave Totten, SPC Staff
Ryan Gordon, SPC Staff
- (Indicates Voting Member)

1. November 18th, 2010 TTC Meeting Minutes (Attachment A)

Chuck DiPietro called the meeting to order at 10:02 a.m. and reviewed the agenda for the meeting. The November 18th, 2010 meeting minutes were approved with no revisions.

2. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

3. FHWA/PennDOT Central Office Reports

Matt Smoker stated that he had no updates on the information he presented at last month's TTC meeting.

a). PennDOT Central Office's Candidate List of Interstate Management Program Projects (Attachment B)

Kevin McCullough reviewed Attachment B, which was a draft list of the statewide Interstate Management (IM) Program Projects and a cover letter from Larry Shifflet, Director of the PennDOT Central Office Center for Program Development and Management. Chuck DiPietro noted that SPC staff will be providing comments on the draft IM program back to Central Office. Kevin explained that the IM program was divided into two lists; one for resurfacing and preservation projects and one for replacement and reconstruction projects. Kevin noted that in an effort to prioritize the draft program, software named Decision Lens was used to conduct a detailed analysis. The software analyses project factors and assigns a weighted score to each project that results in a priority list. Kevin reviewed the weighting tree for the Decision Lens software, the two draft statewide project lists, the total project scores, and the project benefit cost benefit ratios. Chuck DiPietro reviewed some of the correspondence that had taken place between himself and Central Office on the draft list. Kevin emphasized that this is just a first cut at the IM program priorities and adjustments will be made to the Decision Lens output. Chuck DiPietro asked what the time frame was to finalize the statewide IM program priority list. Kevin responded that Central Office would like to have a plan in the spring and then begin to manage the plan and make adjustments to the current IM program if additional project savings become available. Kevin stated that the priority list will be useful in determining the next project to receive funds if savings from other interstate project becomes available.

Joe Szczur asked Kevin to clarify what the sorted order the projects are presented in and

(Attachment A)

how many years does the list cover. Kevin responded they are sorted by total score given by the Decision Lens software. Chuck DiPietro noted that according to the cover letter, the list covers 12 years. Joe Szczur stated that District 12-0 has a 25 year plan for the Interstates in District 12-0 and noted that the 50 miles of I-70 within District 12-0 is their top priority in that plan. Joe stated that he has significant concerns about both I-70 and I-79 in District 12-0; noting that portions of these interstates have been fixed with band-aid treatments in the past that have now surpassed their useful life and now require reconstruction. Cheryl Moon Sirianni noted that the Districts have methods for Interstate prioritization and that there are complicated factors involved in the prioritization.

Chuck noted that SPC staff can be a messenger of this information to Central Office in the form of our comments. Kevin McCullough noted that if the Decision Lens analysis is coming to different conclusions than the Districts priorities then Central Office would want to know that type of specific information. Chuck note the presence of some very expensive projects on I-95 at the top of the priority rankings. Chuck urged anyone with comments to send him by December 14th.

Kevin noted that there has been no action on the appropriations of the continuing resolution to extend SAFETEA-LU.

4. Action on Amendments and Modifications to the 2011 to 2014 TIP

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

a.) PennDOT District 10-0 (Attachment C)

Doug Dupnock of PennDOT District 10-0 pointed to the administrative actions to the 2011-2014 TIP. District 10-0 had no amendment request this month.

The PennDOT District 10-0 administrative action requests to the TIP did not require TTC approval and was presented only for information purposes.

b.) PennDOT District 11-0 (Attachment D & Handout 1)

Rob Miskanic of PennDOT District 11-0 pointed to the amendment requests and administrative actions to the 2011-2014 TIP. District 11-0 had five amendments:

- o Allegheny Riverfront Green Boulevard – add \$1.5 million dollars from various sources (DOT, HUD, and Private) to conduct the Allegheny Riverfront Green Boulevard Study;
- o Clinton Rd – Add 1 million in construction funds in 2012 to the 2011 TIP;
- o All Weather Pavement Markings add \$340,000 in construction funds to the 2011 TIP;
- o Route 422 Cascade to Butler - add \$980,000 in construction funds to the 2011

- TIP;
- o Route 28 Stormwater mitigation – add project for \$300,000 in construction funds to the 2011 TIP;

Pat Hasset noted that on the Allegheny Riverfront Green Boulevard study, the City is still working out the scope of the study and the administration involves a new type of funding from HUD. Pat noted that he is working with Matt Smoker to figure out how the project will be administered. Kevin McCullough noted that to get the funding into MPMS it had to be inputted as STP, but it will not count against the base STP funds. Cheryl Moon Sirianni noted that the Clinton road project was initiated by Findley Township who donated all of the ROW acquisition and the preliminary design for the project. The project will include the removal of a building that is currently dangerously close to the roadway.

The TTC motioned and unanimously approved the PennDOT District 11-0 amendment and administrative action requests to the TIP.

- c.) Port Authority of Allegheny County – Governor’s proposal to pass through \$45 million in state discretionary funds to the Port Authority of Allegheny County (Handout 2)

Chuck DiPietro reviewed the background of the current proposal to assist the Port Authority with its current financial crisis. The Governor met with members of SPC last week to discuss the details of the funding he was proposing to pass to the Port Authority of Allegheny County. The statewide financial guidance reserves \$25 million per year in state funds for transportation improvements associated with economic development opportunities. Formerly called “economic development” in the statewide financial guidance, the program is now titled “Transportation Infrastructure Investment.” Decisions on how to utilize this funding is at the discretion of the Secretary of Transportation. Governor Rendell and Secretary Biehler have proposed this funding transfer to the Port Authority as a good use of the discretionary funds. Currently, the funds are not eligible for direct distribution to transit projects without the approval of SPC. Chuck stated that the proposal is to bring an emergency action to the full Commission for a December 13th vote on the issue. Chuck noted that he is seeking discussion of this issue and a possible recommendation from the TTC for Commission action.

Kevin McCullough noted that the actual amount available is \$45 million he will double check and provide revised language and numbers for the fiscal constraint chart and narrative. Jeff Raykes asked what the TTC was being asked to do at this time. Chuck stated that typically when a major TIP amendment goes to the Commission it is accompanied by a recommendation from the technical committee. Pat Hasset asked that in this case the technical committee to recommend the amendment would be the Transit

Operators Committee. Kevin McCullough and Chuck DiPietro responded; no these funds, currently economic development funds, are not transit funds and therefore not under the Transit TIP until transferred by SPC action. Chuck DiPietro added that the action will be proposed to the Commission as a transfer of funds because the source of the funds comes from outside the region. Kevin stated that this is money that has been set aside for special projects to be used at the discretion of the Governor and the Secretary of Transportation. Currently, the money is in an economic development fund that cannot be used for transit. Kevin urged everyone not to lose sight of the fact that this is \$45 million of new funds being distributed to the region from projects that did not advance.

Lynn Heckman stated that the need to support the Port Authority transit operations is an economic development activity due to the role transit plays in getting people to jobs and reducing congestion. Pat Hassett concurred with Lynn stating that the use of these funds is consistent with the original intent of these statewide funds for use in economic development projects. It was generally agreed that text on this economic impact aspect should be added to the resolution presented to the Commission for action.

Jeff Raykes asked if the funding was only a temporary fix to a long-term problem. Kevin Gray stated that it is only a temporary fix that would allow operations to continue until July. Lynn Heckman noted that the Port Authority will likely still make some cuts which could allow the funds to extend operations beyond July. Kevin McCullough noted that fare increases are another factor that will likely extend operations. Chuck noted that the Port Authority Board will be meeting to decide the most efficient way to maximize the return from funding under the Governor's proposal.

Lynn Heckman made a motion to have the TTC recommend that the full Commission take an action on the Governors proposal with special attention drawn to the fact that utilizing these funds for transit is consistent with the original intent of the funds as economic development.

Darrin Alviano asked for clarification on the motion; were they voting to recommend approval or just that an action be taken. Lynn clarified that an action be taken on the Governors proposal. Pat Hassett seconded the motion. The motion was approved; the vote breakdown was as follows:

YES - PennDOT Central Office, Allegheny, County Beaver County, Fayette County, Greene County, Washington County, and Westmoreland County.

NO – Indiana County

ABSTAINED – Armstrong County

Matt Smoker noted that FHWA is not a voting member of the TTC or the Commission.

d.) PennDOT District 12-0 (Attachment E)

Stacy Rabatin of PennDOT District 12-0 pointed to the amendments and administrative actions to the 2011-2014 TIP. District 12-0 had three amendments this month.

- Meadowlands Interchange – add \$9 million of economic development funds to the TIP for the construction phase of the project.
- Raised pavement markers – add the project to the 2011 TIP
- Right of Way Consultant – add project to the 2011 TIP

The administrative actions were all straight forward and there were no questions.

Jeff Leithauser asked that the description of the Meadowlands Interchange delete the Bass Pro Shops reference. Stacey stated that she can rework the description in MPMS.

Joe Sczcur explained that the ROW consultant project will allow the District to utilize a consultant to assist the ROW unit with a backlog of work.

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

5. STP Urban Project Selection Process (Handout 3)

Chuck DiPietro stated that SPC is proposing to implement a project selection process for the STP urban funds with the next TIP update. Chuck stated that Karen Franks will review some of the details of the proposal and staff is seeking TTC feedback.

Karen Franks conducted a presentation on the proposal to implement project selection for the STP urban funds. Her presentation touched on the following:

- The Proposed STP Urban Eligibility
- A map of the applicable urban areas and urban clusters of the region
- The proposed distribution of funds by District
- Two set-aside programs to be funded out of these funds: SPC Signal Program and the Regional Smart Transportation Program
- Carryover project priority

Pat Hassett asked if the urban boundaries would be different than the map presented due to new 2010 Census data. Matt Smoker responded that the new 2010 Census urban boundaries will not be ready until at least 2012 so the program eligibility will have to be based on the current map shown. Chuck noted that a key point is that each county has some area designated as urban. Karen noted that the carryover STP Urban projects will have priority in 2013 and 2014 with any

new STP urban funded projects likely not coming on until 2015. Karen reviewed the set-aside funds and the two SPC regional programs: Signals and Smart Transportation. Chuck DiPietro noted that currently the SPC Signal Program has been funded through CMAQ funds, however the program cannot use CMAQ funds in New Castle, where there is a big need to upgrade many of the signals. Lucinda Beattie asked what this shift would mean for the City of Pittsburgh signal projects. Chuck responded that the City has received funding for projects in both rounds of the SPC Regional Signal Program and their eligibility would not be impacted by this shift. Cheryl Moon Sirianni stated that she is not in favor of switching away from CMAQ as the funding source for the signal program. She stated that CMAQ is one of the least flexible funding sources that exists and it is very useful to utilize CMAQ funds for a program as beneficial as the signal program. Chuck DiPietro stated that the two issues with CMAQ funding for the signal program are: no eligibility for projects in New Castle and the local match requirements eliminate many distressed municipalities. Cheryl stated to keep in mind we are already assisting the municipalities with fixing signals that are entirely their responsibility and that she feels a local commitment should be required. Lynn Heckman recommended that SPC look into a regional loan program for distressed municipalities to fund signal projects. Chuck DiPietro closed the discussion by saying that they will continue to seek TTC feedback and ideas on the STP urban process over the next few TTC meetings.

6.) Long Range Plan Update Status Report (Handout 4)

Chuck DiPietro presented a 10 minute presentation on the update of the Long-Range Plan. Chuck detailed various aspects of the plan update activities underway, along with a schedule of milestones associated with the plan update. Chuck noted that the plan update is expected to include issues on economic aspects and transportation impacts of the Marcellus Shale drilling.

Lynn Heckman asked if the plan was going to have a housing component. Lynn cited new and innovative funding sources such as TIGER grants and HUD grants are likely to continue and are likely to want to see housing integrated into the MPO long-range plan. Lynn does not want the region to miss out on these funding opportunities because the region is lacking a housing component to the long-range plan. Chuck fully concurred with Lynn's on target insights. Cheryl Moon Sirianni noted that if the counties all have up to date comp plans with a housing component maybe these could be pulled together for the region. She also noted that District 11-0 has some new metrics for capacity adding projects that involve checks with the land use planning documents such as comp plans.

7. Business/Status Reports

a.) SPC Public Participation Plan Update

Matt Pavlosky reviewed the activities underway to update the SPC Public Participation

(Attachment A)

Plan. Matt stated that the plan is in an internal review stage and following that there will be a 45-day public review period prior to the adoption of the Public Participation Plan. Matt also reviewed some of the goals and initiatives driving the update of the Public Participation Plan. The goal is to make a document that is more accessible and easier to interpret, while still maintaining legal standards. Matt also noted that he will be working with the counties to update the PPP appointees early next year. Cheryl stated that Matt may want to talk to Jim Struzzi of PennDOT District 11-0 about what types of techniques work best for social networking and internet presence in conducting public involvement.

b.) Transit Operators Committee

David Totten reviewed the draft agenda for the next TOC meeting, which will be held on December 15th. The agenda will include discussion of the action that the Commission takes regarding the Governor's proposal to fund the Port Authority. David noted that a work group to discuss regional trip planning capabilities will be reporting to the TOC. David noted that discussions will also include changes in the way transit agencies report data to the national transit database.

Next Transportation Technical Committee – January 20th

Next Commission Meeting – December 13th

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 a new project or delete an existing project (except for emergency situations and 100% state or local funded projects as stated below)
- 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
- Adds a project from a funding initiative or line item that utilizes 100% state or local funding
- Correction of a misprint or data entry error
- Addition of local match funds
- Schedule change, for projects or phases in any of the first four years of the TIP
- Change in the funding source
- Exempt projects

New or Deleted Phase

The Transportation Technical Committee or Transit Operators Committee can approve an administrative action if the cost is \$5 million or less for a highway and/or transit project.

Line Items

The programming on the TIP of specific projects within an approved line item (i.e., betterments, rail-highway crossings, Transit Section 5310 Program, transportation enhancements, bridge preservation and 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 Transportation Technical Committee or Transit Operators Committee approval.

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 of \$1 million or less by reporting the change to the committee for informational purposes only. The Transportation Technical Committee or Transit Operators Committee must approve a cost change greater than \$1 million but \$5 million or less for a highway and/or transit project. The action becomes effective when it is forwarded by the committee to PennDOT and FHWA or FTA.

Administrative actions do not require Federal approval but FHWA and FTA reserve the right to reject an administrative action if it is not consistent with federal regulations and the current STIP/TIP Modifications Memorandum of Understanding between PennDOT, FHWA, and FTA. SPC and PennDOT will work cooperatively to address and respond to any such administrative actions rejected and returned by FHWA and/or FTA.

TIP Amendments

Any project change that cannot be processed within the rules governing administrative actions must be handled as a TIP amendment request. 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 and any emergency projects that are considered administrative actions)
- Adds a new project phase or deletes a phase that exceeds \$5 million for a highway and/or transit project
- Creates a new line item
- Adds or deletes a project or a project phase that transfers Federal funds between a TIP and a Statewide line item
- Involves a major change in the project scope of work or design concept

New or Deleted Project

The Transportation Technical Committee or Transit Operators 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 and/or 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 Transportation Technical Committee or Transit Operators Committee. Changes that exceed \$10 million require approval by the Commission.

Major TIP Amendments

A proposed change must be considered as a Major TIP amendment if it meets any of the following criteria:

- Turnpike projects advancing under the 1987 Turnpike Expansion Act
- Amendment requests with an air quality impact that requires air quality testing and conformity determination and a 30-day public comment period including a public meeting before they can be presented to the Commission.
- Highway funds flexed to Transit projects
- A major significant change in the scope and/or schedule of an existing project
- A major deferral/delay to a lower priority project
- High visibility projects deemed potentially controversial. The Transportation Technical Committee or Transit Operators Committee will interpret if any such proposed TIP change should follow the Major TIP Amendment procedures.
- A Major fiscal impact to the region

An opportunity for public review and comment will be provided for all major TIP Amendment requests. Amendment requests with an impact that has been deemed Major, are subject to a 30-day public comment period and a public meeting before they can be presented to the Commission.

Transportation Technical Committee or Transit Operators Committee Authorization to handle TIP modifications as Administrative Actions and/or Amendments is an option intended to streamline the procedures and the effectiveness of the review process. Transportation Technical Committee or Transit Operators Committee members may request that Major TIP Amendment requirements be applied regardless of whether the change would otherwise qualify.

Special Expedited Approval Option

A proposed change requiring Transportation Technical Committee, Transit Operators Committee, or Commission action, may be expedited via e-mail, fax, and/or telephone ballot if it meets any of the following criteria:

- The safety of the public would be jeopardized by waiting until the TTC/TOC/Commission meets formally
- A project or projects would be significantly delayed by waiting until the TTC/TOC/Commission meets formally
- A delay would significantly and adversely affect, the scheduling, cost and/or funding of the project or projects
- The project is not considered a Major TIP Amendment
- When special funding uniquely made available through federal or state channels may be jeopardized by delays in project delivery or funding obligation

Expedited Procedures

A project narrative will be prepared by the project sponsor requesting expedited action including the project name and contact person, project description (including map), requested action, the justification for the ballot, the project funding, impacts to other projects, and any other discussion needed to supply the best information to the voting members.

The project request and narrative, will be e-mailed, faxed, and/or mailed to all voting members of the appropriate Committee and/or Commission within an appropriate time for a decision to be made. (A minimum of one week will be allowed for review and questions prior to the request for a vote. If less than one week is needed for the vote, justification shall be given.)

A deadline will be established for the tallying of votes. If a vote is not received by the deadline, SPC staff will attempt to contact the voting members to receive their votes. If approved, the action will then be forwarded by SPC staff to PennDOT and FHWA or FTA in accordance with established procedures. TIP amendments only become effective when federal approvals are received by SPC. As with administrative actions, SPC and PennDOT will work cooperatively to address and respond to any FHWA and/or FTA comments on TIP amendment actions.

Results of the vote will be presented at the next regularly scheduled meeting of the Committee/Commission. Any remaining discussion of the issue will be allowed.