

**Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Transportation Operations & Safety Forum
February 25, 2021
Virtual Meeting Summary**

Attendees (51):

FHWA: Dan Walston, Jeff Engle

PennDOT Central Office: Doug Tomlinson, Gavin Gray, Kevin McCullough

PennDOT District 11: Todd Kravits, Kathryn Power, Stephanie Zolnack, Bill Lesterick, Ed Miller, Doug Barch, John Balay,
Ruth McClelland

PennDOT District 12: Bryan Walker, Joshua Theakston

Allegheny County: Ann Ogoreuc

Port Authority of Allegheny County: Chuck Rompala, Craig Toocheck

Butler County: Joel Mackey

Westmoreland County: Dan Carpenter

Westmoreland Transit: Alan Blahovec

Washington County: Jason Theakston

Cranberry Township: Kelly Maurer, Marty McKinney

Carnegie Mellon University: Rick Grahn, Stan Caldwell, Chris Hendrickson, Rich Feder

SPC Staff: Andy Waple, Josh Spano, Evan Schoss, Chuck Imbrogno, Ronda Craig, Tom Klevan, Leanne Chaney,
Cathy Tulley, Domenic D'Andrea

Consultants: David DiGioia, Dan Fritz, Mark Metil, Mike Mudry, Jim Ritzmann, Kevin Conahan, Brad Marsteller,
Amanda Purcell, Chris Prisk, Ashley Tracy, Jim Katsafanas, Kelly Rigot, Joe Rusiewicz, Kevin Ferry

Introduction

Dom D'Andrea of SPC welcomed the attendees and initiated a round of introductions.

Central Office Statewide Updates:

Doug Tomlinson provided Central Office updates including:

- The National Operations Center of Excellence recently awarded PennDOT two awards. One award was related to PennDOT's Regional Operations Planning and the other was a Project of the Year award for PennDOT's TSMO Performance and Analytics tool
- PennDOT Publication 191 was recently updated (Traffic Signal Maintenance)
- PennDOT is moving towards implementing All Weather pavement markings on state roadways. They are more durable and more visible to the driver. All Weather pavement markings are typically a tape or poly urea material embedded into the pavement. Initial implementation will involve the skip lines between lanes on PennDOT interstates.
- Safety discussions are happening more on the planning level. Central Office is looking to maximize the return on investment relative to reduced fatalities and serious injuries.

Travel Impacts of a Complete Street Project in a Mixed Urban Corridor

Rick Grahn of Carnegie Mellon University presented on the Complete Street Project on Forbes Avenue through the CMU campus (between Margaret Morrison Street and Craig Street). The purpose of this study was to quantify the impacts of a complete street project over a two year time frame. The \$4 million project included:

- Reduction in vehicle lanes from 4 to 3
- Repaving
- Introduction of bicycle lanes
- New pedestrian crosswalks and pedestrian signals
- Adaptive signal system
- Improved bus pull-offs
- New street lighting

This section of Forbes Avenue carried approximately 13,000 vehicles per day. The study included installation of a camera to collect data, review of available crash data, and review of available probe data. The results of this study were typical of other similar studies reviewed. The project resulted in reduced traffic volumes (11-31%), reduced speeds (15-37%), increase in bicycle volumes (over 100%), modest increases in bus ridership, and reduced crashes. More future data is desirable to make a more specific conclusion on reduced crashes. Furthermore, there were no adverse impacts (like volume increases) to the parallel corridor (Fifth Avenue).

Dan Walston asked about impacts to freight traffic. Rick indicated that he planned to do some follow up study work which would include this. Dom D'Andrea inquired about any reduction in the severity of crashes. Again, Rick indicated that this would be done in his follow-up research.

Regional Transportation Safety Action Plan

Dom D'Andrea made a presentation on the Regional Transportation Safety Action Plan which was adopted earlier this year by SPC. His presentation is summarized as follows:

- SPC, like PennDOT supports a Toward Zero Deaths goal.
- The plan provides the blueprint for improving the region's Federal Performance measures.
- SPC coordinated the involvement of 62 individuals from 26 organizations to serve as the steering committee and stakeholder group for this safety plan. Seven virtual meetings were held from April-October of 2020 to discuss, review, and formulate the plan.
- The plan is data driven and includes 13 regional focus areas. Focus areas are also broken down by PennDOT District as well and many strategies are presented to address them.
- The plan also includes 157 specific potential safety project locations based on the data.
- The plan also endorses continued support of existing successful initiatives (PennTIME, RSAs, etc.) and proposes new initiatives like a local roadway safety initiative.

SPC's Use of the NPMRDS Data for the Congestion Management Process (CMP)

Evan Schoss presented on SPC's utilization of the National Performance Measure Research Data Set (NPMRDS) in our Congestion Management Process (CMP). SPC's current congested corridor set includes 113 corridors that are monitored for travel time and speed. The CMP includes steps like corridor selection, data collection and monitoring, strategy development, strategy implementation, and strategy monitoring. SPC's method of data collection has evolved from travel time collected by driving the corridor (pre 2012) to blue tooth data collection (years 2012 to 2018) to the use of NPMRDS data through the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) platform accessed through the University of Maryland's CATT lab. Through the use of the NPMRDS data, SPC is able to update travel times and planning time indices for all congested corridors in a timely fashion. Through the use of this data and the RITIS tools, SPC is also able to compare its federal operations metrics with that of other regions (like interstate reliability, non-interstate reliability, truck reliability, etc).

Other SPC activities

SPC Operations and Safety staff gave brief updates on other staff activities such as upcoming Traffic Incident Management meetings, the 4th cycle of the Regional Traffic Signal Program, and an upcoming Regional Roundabout Screening Study.

Next Meeting (virtual) is tentatively scheduled for Friday, June 25th, 2021.