



## SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION

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### MINUTES TRANSIT OPERATORS COMMITTEE MEETING

Date: December 8, 2021  
 Location: **Meeting was held by online video/teleconference**

Attendance:

Members: Sheila Gombita, WASH (Chairperson)  
 Ed Typanski, PAAC  
 Anthony Hickton, CommuteInfo  
 Alan Blahovec, WCTA  
 Lynn Manion, ACTA  
 Kathryn Schlesinger, PDP  
 David Richards, NCATA  
 Mavis Rainey, OTMA  
 John Paul, BTA  
 Mary Jo Morandini, BCTA

Guests/Staff: David Wohlwill, PAAC  
 Seth Davis, PAAC  
 Jeffrey Devlin, PAAC  
 Lynda Conway, Delta Development  
 Sam Plocinski, PennDOT  
 Andy Batson, PennDOT  
 Lucinda Beattie, WPPR  
 Jeffrey Kupko, Michael Baker, Int'l  
 Lisa Kay Schweyer, CMU  
 Lauren Tarte, Masabi  
 Lee Biernbaum, Masabi  
 Darryl Philips, HDR  
 Nugent Laing, HDR

SPC Staff: Tom Klevan  
 Kathy Stefani  
 Ronda Craig  
 Chuck Imbrogno  
 Erika Eagen  
 Stephanie Kambic  
 David Totten  
 Dan Bernazzoli  
 Sara Walfoort  
 Leann Chaney

This meeting of the TOC was called to order at 10:00 A.M.

## 1. Welcome and Introductions

## 2. Public Comment –

- a. *There was no public comment.*

## 3. Approval of Meeting Minutes for previous Transit Operators Committee meeting

- **ACTION:** *The Committee unanimously approved the minutes for the September 8, 2021 meeting on a motion from Mary Jo Morandini and a second by Alan Blahovec.*

## 4. Endorsement of the Draft FFY 2023-26 TIP

- *The Committee considered the draft program of projects proposed for the FFY 2023-26 Transportation Improvement Program for Southwestern Pennsylvania.*
  - **ACTION:** *The TOC unanimously voted to recommend that SPC adopt the Draft FFY 2023-26 TIP on a motion from John Paul and a second by David Richards.*

## 5. Amendments and Administrative Actions to the FFY 2021-2024 TIP

- *The Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC) requested an amendment to the FFY2021-2024 TIP to add the project “RideACTA Shuttle” (MPMS# 117531) to fund first mile/last mile service in the Airport Corridor area of Allegheny County with \$201,336 in federal 5307 funding, \$42,784 in state funding 338 funding and \$7,550 in local funding in FFY 2022..*  
**TOTAL CHANGE: \$251,670**
  - **ACTION:** *This action was unanimously approved and the appropriate changes were made to the region’s FFY2021-2024 TIP by the TOC on a motion by Mary Jo Morandini and a second by David Richards. Staff will transmit this project information to the PennDOT Program Center within one week of this action.*

*There were no TIP adjustments requested.*

## 6. FTA/PennDOT Updates

- Andy Batson from the PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation representatives reported on status of implementing the new federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). Batson said that the continuing resolution approved by Congress extends existing funding through February 18, but new apportionments will be needed after that. FTA is still working on tables, part of which depends on getting data from the new Census. Batson said to expect a 30-40% increase over existing funding. The American Public Transportation Association has compiled an informal analysis by UZA, but PennDOT is waiting on official financial guidance.
- Batson also reported that the Bureau is working on updating the group plan for Transit Asset Management. He also requested that agencies share their safety plans and targets with SPC—the FTA will check on these through the MPO.
- Batson said that the BPT is working on 5311 operating grants.
- Batson noted that FTA’s Katie Berillo is moving to Amtrak and her many years of work on Pennsylvania transit issues are greatly appreciated.

## 7. Transit Participant Updates

- BTA—John Paul reported that BTA’s recent construction project is nearly complete. An RFP will be issued soon for fixed route service.
- SPC—Tom Klevan reported on the multi-stakeholder Cranberry Multimodal Hub study that recently kicked off. This project will consider the feasibility of a hub at a proposed development site in southern Butler County. A stakeholder charrette is planned for January.
- ACTA—Lynn Manion thanked SPC for help securing federal operating funds for the RideACTA Shuttle. She is working with BHJ in West Virginia and Steel Valley Transit in Ohio to develop a tri-state transit shuttle centered on airport employers. SPC’s Ronda Craig is working with ACTA and the other entities on this proposal. Sheila Gombita noted that

Burgettstown is also a big hub in this area—SPC will research this concept. Mary Jo Morandini has met with Amazon about opportunities to serve their facility in Imperial and has offered to host a job fair for the company.

- WASH—Sheila Gombita noted that Burgettstown is also a big hub in this area

*There were no other meeting participant updates.*

## **8. Discussion: Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act**

- TOC members considered issues and opportunities related to the recently enacted transportation law.
  - Mary Jo Morandini wondered if transit agencies can match this funding. She said transit ballot initiatives pass, nationally, if that mechanism could be made available.
  - Port Authority’s David Wohlwill noted an upcoming training webinar from FTA. Port Authority has recently been granted funding through FTA’s TOD planning program for extending the East Busway, and this program is continued in IJJA.
  - CMU’s Lisa Kay Schweyer noted the availability of research funding through IJJA and said the university was looking for research partners.
  - John Paul said that PennDOT has not wanted to fund operating and asked if PennDOT will match IJJA projects?

## **9. Masabi & Port Authority fare collection project update**

- Port Authority staff and representatives from the fare collection/Mobility as a Service firm, Masabi, reported on their recent implementations in Allegheny County.
  - Lauren Tate from Masabi noted the potential for a “fare payment as a service” system and said that potential regionalization was a feature of the product. Masabi has implemented a multi-state regional system called EZ Fare in Michigan, Ohio and Kentucky. This system uses a regional board and has sub-brands for each participating agency, but has advantages of scale.
  - Tate noted that PAAC is talking about shifting to account-based ticketing, like that used in EZ Fare. This would allow for innovative fare policies such as fare capping—in fact, fare capping is essentially built into Masabi’s system. They are also piloting a project for contactless credit/debit card validation in Bilbao, Spain. PAAC’s hardware would support such a pilot, also, with its NFC validation.
  - Third-party payments, such as MovePGH, Spin, bike share, etc., are also possible through Masabi’s systems. This could also help with other integrations, such as special event/tourism ticketing, health care tickets or social services. Demand Response/Paratransit could also use this.
  - Coordination through an MOU, by the MPO would help speed implementation.
  - Mary Jo Morandini noted that BCTA is also launching with Masabi in February or March. She said BCTA expressly wants to add a regional fare, and wants to use this capability to allow for trans-agency transfers at Ambridge between BCTA and PAAC. While a long-term implementation will take some work, Tate said something could be done in the short term that would accomplish this.
  - Masabi has had conversations with intercity providers, but they are concentrating on public transit, since the requirements for a reservation system are less compatible with the software.

## **10. Bus Platooning Pilot Project**

- Jeff Kupko from Michael Baker, International, presented the firm’s work for PennDOT to research the innovative concept of bus platooning as a pilot study.
  - This technology may be available in the 2024-26 time frame. The study looked at the existing service in Westmoreland County and considered if it could be used to create a

- train-like service to complement Amtrak service to Harrisburg, or if it could be used for fixed-route service to New Stanton. Some related tech, such as Transit Signal Priority, was also considered in the analysis.
- Kupko says the planners looked at the system and proposed an implementation plan. They considered positive and negative impacts and concluded that the technology is feasible and the route is feasible, but some places would need additional investments.
  - The next step will be to consider the route complexity, engineering, funding, partnerships, rider communication and to monitor the development and maturity of the technology.

## 11. SPC Staff Updates

- There are still six free bus shelters available through the University of Pittsburgh. Contact David Totten at SPC if you are interested.
- CommuteInfo will be releasing an RFP for ride-matching software.
- SPC Staff wish the transit agencies and TOC participants a happy holiday season.

## 12. Other Business

- *The next meeting of the TOC is scheduled for 10 a.m. **Wednesday, February 16, 2022.** Participation details will be made available at [www.spcregion.org](http://www.spcregion.org)*

***Action:** The meeting was adjourned on a motion by Mary Jo Morandini and a second by Alan Blahovec.*