

MINUTES  
SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN  
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE  
VIRTUAL/HYBRID MEETING  
Tuesday, September 10, 2024 – 10:30 A.M.

PERSONS PRESENT

Jeremy Coxe  
Dale Perry  
Brandon Leach  
Courtney Lyle  
Brian Barnhizer  
Chris Conti  
Peter Messina  
Dan Gracenin  
Julia Cornell  
Lyndsey DeVito  
Jason Tomko  
Tom McClelland  
Emily Aloiz  
Ed Reese  
Sara Tassone  
Mark Nicholson  
Steven Theiss  
Ken Robertson  
Cindy Black  
Brian McNulty  
Mark Tobin  
Lucinda Lipko  
Mirta Reyes-Chapman  
Darrin Hetich  
Gary Dovey

REPRESENTING

Hermitage City  
Shenango Township  
PennDOT  
PennDOT D-1  
MCRPC  
MCRPC  
MCRPC  
MCRPC  
PennDOT  
PennDOT D  
City of Sharon  
PennDot  
Erie MPO  
GPD Group  
PennDot 1-0  
PennDot 1-0  
Resident of Sharon  
Sharpsville Borough  
Wilmington Township  
PennDOT D-1  
PennDOT  
Springfield Township  
Eastgate Regional COG  
GPI, Pittsburgh  
Penn Northwest Dev.Corp.

1. Mr. Coxe called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. **A quorum was not present.**
2. Approval of Minutes of the June 25, 2024, MPO Coordinating Committee Meetings- Vote not taken.
3. **2023-2026 Highway/Bridge TIP Modifications and Informational Items (Brandon Leach-PennDOT CPDM)**

There were no amendments and 21 administrative modifications to the highway bridge TIP modifications. We're first looking at the administrative actions 15 and 16. These administrative actions are linked to a cash flow of state 581 funds between the SR 3020 from 18 to 3011 project and the SR 18 Mill Hill Road project in the federal fiscal years 2024 and 2025. In action 15, we are taking \$180,000 and \$40,000 in State 581 funds and adding to the final design and right-of-way phases in federal fiscal year 2024. An additional, \$357,000 in state 581 funds were added to the utility phase of the Mill Hill Road Project from the construction phase of the 18 to 3011 project all in fiscal year 2024.

For action 16, in the Federal Fiscal year 2025, we're taking \$985,598 from the construction phase of the 18 to 3011 project and moving it to the utility and construction phases of the SR35 Mill Hill Road project. In fiscal year 2026, we are taking another \$559,402 and putting it into the Mill Hill Road project. This means we are advancing two of the phases in the 18-3011 project and the construction phase in Mill Hill Road and then moving the construction for 18-3011 back a few more years in 2025 and 2026.

Mr. Dale Perry asked about the status of the repaving project in West Middlesex and if the shoulders could be marked as a bike/pedestrian lane.

Ms. Courtney Lyle stated that a similar project was let earlier this year and they are waiting to pave it because of the State Route 318 bridge detour. Now that the bridge is going to be open they will be starting the project. Most of the paving will happen in Spring 2025.

Mr. Tom McClelland stated the shoulders will be paved. All shoulders in PA are considered pedestrian access when there's an absence of sidewalks or trails. The shoulders vary in width and aren't wide enough for a marked bike lane.

Mr. Perry asked for clarification on the gravel shoulders getting paved during the 2025 paving project. Mr. Brian McNulty said he would have to look into the project and speak with Mr. Perry after the meeting.

Mr. Leach discussed a couple of the informational items that were shared in the meeting packet. The first four pages (Fiscal Constraint Chart) of the packet supplied by PennDOT consists of one amendment and eight administrative actions.

The amendment doesn't require a vote because it involved a statewide action that was approved by FHWA and this involves adding the federal TAP funds to the State Route 18, North Hermitage Road sidewalk project. This was a TASA awarded project from 2024 that received \$392,583 in the federal fiscal year 2025 and the TAP reserve line item, central office line item was used as the funding source.

Administrative actions four, five, six, and seven are all actions linked to the just over \$1,000,000 construction cost increase to the Gilmore Road Bridges Project, MPMS 1665. This increase of over a million dollars required the central office approval of the program center, which was approved at the end of June of this year. These costs were incurred due to cost estimate changes since the original planning level estimate in 2019-2020. In total, just over \$200,000 in federal STP funds, a little over \$500,000 in federal BRIP funds, and \$472,000 in federal BOF funds were added to the project. At the same time, \$70,000 in local funds were removed to match the current estimate. The Mercer local bridge line item, statewide STP reserve line item, and the Hosack Road Bridges project, MPMS 112678, were used as funding sources for this. Mr. Leach opened the floor to questions, but there were none.

**Note: Information regarding these modifications has been posted to the "Mercer County MPO and Public Information" page of MCRPC's website (within the "transportation" sub-section) at <https://mcrpc.com/transportation/mercercounty-mpo/>.**

#### **4. Safe and Accessible: Complete Streets Policy (Peter Messina & Chris Conti, SVATS MPO Staff)**

Due to not having a quorum, the policy cannot be voted on. Mr. Peter Messina discussed the scoring process which had been sent to members in February. The floor was opened for questions. There were no questions asked.

#### **5. Discussion of 2025-2027 UPWP (Dan Gracenin, SVATS MPO)**

- a. **Removal of Traffic Counts Assignments (Task III A.)** Mr. Dan Gracenin discussed the elimination of the traffic counts from the work program. He explained the equipment is reaching the end of its useful life. Mr. Brian Barnhizer, who conducts the counts, is also retiring soon. The elimination of that work item from the work program has been discussed with the PennDOT Central Office. Mr. Gracenin reported a letter is required to formally request the change. This action will remove \$9,000 from the work program. MCRPC will still conduct traffic counts for the municipalities as long as the equipment lasts.
- b. **The current UPWP** is being worked on and will be submitted for approval at the December 10<sup>th</sup> meeting, after the comment period.

#### **6. Project Update Summary**

- a. **STU and TA Projects (Brian Barnhizer, SVATS MPO)** Mr. Brian Barnhizer stated there are currently seven STU/TA projects in total.
  - i. McKinley Avenue Bridge Replacement Project – Mercer Borough. Ms. Courtney Lyle of PennDot stated the project is in the design phase and the current estimate is \$1.2 million for the bridge replacement. Ms. Lyle said they will be discussing if there's a way to look at the local bridge line item to help with funding any of the \$400,000 to \$600,000 overrun after PE, so it's not completely on the borough. We're looking at being able to advertise it in December for a let in February of 2025.
  - ii. State Route 58/ State Route 18 Intersection Project - Greenville. They had a pre-construction meeting on August 19th, and a notice to proceed was issued on August 26th.
  - iii. Springfield Township State Route 208 Phase II Project. Township Administrator Ms. Lucina Lupko informed Mr. Barnhizer that Phase II has been completed. Since some issues have made it unlikely that the planned Phase III project would be undertaken in the near future, the Township is hoping that the grant funds awarded for the project (funded outside of the MPO) can be redirected to other work within the municipality.
  - iv. Service Avenue Bridge Replacement Project - Sharon. Mr. Barnhizer reported that an engineer with HRG met with PennDOT representatives the day after the

last MPO meeting in June to discuss roadway design criteria, and with that guidance, they're working on a complete roadway design and layout. Once they get that done, they can proceed with the type, size, and location (TSL) submission, which will be forwarded to PennDOT.

- v. State Street/Pine Street Project - Sharon. HRG is the engineer for this project as well. They're preparing to submit final construction plans to PennDOT in the near future. PennDOT has signed off on the right-of-way plan and the easement acquisition process has begun.
- vi. High Street Project - Sharpsville. Mr. Ken Robertson informed Mr. Barnhizer that construction began in August and the work is expected to be finished by the end of September.
- vii. Kelly Road Project - Hermitage. Mr. Jeremy Coxe, the planning director for the City of Hermitage, reported that the work on the Kelly Road project is underway.

**b. Major Projects/Other TIP Projects (Mark Nicholson, PennDOT D-1)**

- i. The Gilmore Road project is out to bid and is scheduled to let at the end of the month.
- ii. The paving from Sharon into Sharpsville. That project has a Plans, Specifications and Estimate (PS&E) submission done and the final design meeting was a few weeks ago. It should be advertised next month for let in November.
- iii. The Hosack Road Bridges (2). This project is scheduled to let in December. The two PS&E packages are going through review and they're also finalizing right-of-way acquisitions.
- iv. Reconstruction of Interstate 80 from the Ohio line. The final design meeting was a few weeks ago. The consultant is addressing comments and they're scheduled to have a PS&E submission in on September 23. PennDOT is waiting for the joint permit from DEP and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permit from the Conservation District. The reviewing agency is working on getting the comments that were submitted addressed.
- v. The State Route 318 bridge. This project has the semi-final inspection scheduled for the end of September.
- vi. The 2025 Lamor Road project. The Lamor Road project is in the final design phase and working through the right-of-way acquisition. This project is scheduled to let in February 2025.
- viii. The 718, Sect. 05M paving project. This is an in-house paving project from Bank Place to River Road and is moving through Preliminary Engineering (PE) It is

about 85% complete in the line grading design and working on getting environmental clearance. This project is scheduled to let in April 2025.

- ix. The 718/South Dock Street Bridge Replacement project. This is the replacement of the bridge just south of the roundabout. They are finalizing PE and moving into final design later this fall. The public involvement materials are online.
- x. The Old Mercer Road bridge, just east of Route 19 in Neshannock is finalizing PE and is scheduled to let in November 2025.
- xi. The Route 19 bridge replacement project. The project engineer is finalizing the PE. They have a final design being submitted and we are getting public involvement materials out in the next couple of weeks. Construction is expected to take place in 2025.

### **c. Planning and Data Collection Updates (Brian Barnhizer, SVATS MPO)**

- I. 2024 Traffic Counts: PennDOT & expected Municipal counts. Forty-five of the fifty traffic counts assigned by PennDOT have been completed.
- II. 2024 HPMS Reviews: Mr. Barnhizer stated that MCRPC has about 25% of them done.

## **7. Transportation Funding Updates (PennDOT CPDM and other partners TBD)**

### **a. PennDOT- Brandon Leach PennDOT-**

- i. The PennDOT Green Light Go program announced that 73 municipalities will receive over 30 million dollars for traffic signal upgrades, increasing safety and mobility across Pennsylvania's communities by relieving congestion and improving traffic flow. Mercer County was a recipient of two of those awards, one in Hermitage for a full traffic signal modernization and coordination at Broadway Avenue and Council Avenue, along with the coordinated operation of the traffic signals at the intersection of Broadway Avenue and Mercer Avenue, Church Street, and Emerson Avenue intersections. A separate award was given to Sharon for traffic signal improvements at Service, S. Meyers, and Stambaugh Avenues, as well as Smith Avenue and Pine Hollow Boulevard.
- ii. On August 14<sup>th</sup>, the 2025 Twelve-Year Transportation Improvement Program, TYP, was adopted by the Pennsylvania State Transportation Commission. That is the compilation of all the regional TIPs, as well as the statewide and interstate tips together into one statewide improvement program, which was submitted to FHWA and FTA for their review. Upon their approval at the end of this month, the 2025-2028 TIP will be active on October 1<sup>st</sup>.
- iii. Another PennDOT award announcement was made for the Multimodal

Transportation Fund. This was announced on August 19th that over \$51 million of this funding went forward to support 66 crucial transportation projects across 32 counties in Pennsylvania. The Multi-Modal Transportation Fund, or MTF, provides financial assistance to municipalities, councils of government, governments, businesses, economic development organizations, public transportation agencies, and ports/rail/freight entities. By improving transportation assets, this program seeks to enhance communities, pedestrian safety, and transit revitalization. There was one award in Mercer County for this as well in Hermitage for improvements to Lorenwood Drive near the Hermitage Athletics Complex and the addition of a trail connection within the complex.

- iv. Later this month on September 23rd, PennDOT will begin accepting applications for the next round of funding for grants under the Multimodal Transportation Fund. Applications for that round will be due November 5<sup>th</sup> and we will expect announcements of grant recipients in July 2025.
- v. We are waiting for FHWA approval to confirm that the alternative fuel corridors are built. Once confirmed, we will begin what is known as Community Charging Initiatives across the state. This will focus more on providing those electric charging networks at a more localized scale rather than off of the major travel routes. PennDOT invites the public to submit feedback on the agency's proposal to invest in communities statewide through a survey, which will be shared with follow-up emails to the MPO mailing list and put on the PennDOT website and will be open until October 11th.
- vi. In addition, PennDOT submitted the 2024 NEVI State Plan update, which outlines progress on the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program and how the agency proposes to begin the program's community charging phase, which will bring federal investments to communities across Pennsylvania.

All links will be posted on the MCRPC website under the Transportation tabs.

**b. FHWA/FTA- No updates**

**8. Additional Discussion-**

- a. Mr. Dan Gracenin stated that three of the staff members were going to the Planning Partner's Meeting at State College from September 24 through September 26.
- b. Mr. Gracenin discussed improving safety on State Route 18 by Starbucks. There was a fatal accident due to a car making an illegal left turn at that site. Mr. Gracenin, Mr. Messina, and Mr. Chris Conti met with Mr. Greg Maser (PennDOT) at the site to view the location and discuss different ways to stop drivers from turning left illegally. Mr. Maser stated that PennDOT has already installed another No Left Turn sign at the location. It was also suggested that extending the island further to the east would make turning left harder.

- c. Mr. McNulty stated the State Route 318 bridge is almost fully open. It is currently open as one lane.

**9. Adjournment-** 11:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,  
MPO Secretary

**DMG**