

MINUTES
SHENANGO VALLEY METROPOLITAN
PLANNING ORGANIZATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE
VIRTUAL/HYBRID MEETING
Tuesday, June 25, 2024 – 10:30 A.M.

PERSONS PRESENT

Jeremy Coxe
Dale Perry
Mike Nashtock
Brandon Leach
Ronnique Bishop
Courtney Lyle
Matthew Crea
Brenda Heck
Brian Barnhizer
Chris Conti
Dan Gracenin
Julia Cornell
Lyndsey DeVito
Shelli Oakes
Jasson Urey
Steve Pomykata
Gary Hittle
Paul Hamill
Jason Tomko
Ann Coleman
Julie Piercy
Emily Aloiz
Rod Wilt
Ed Reese
Sara Tassone
Mark Nicholson
Zac Miles
Robert Lark
Steven Theiss
Ken Robertson

REPRESENTING

Hermitage City
Shenango Township
Mercer County Regional Council of Governments
PennDOT
FHWA
PennDOT D-1
PennDOT
Liberty Twp Sec./Treasurer
MCRPC
MCRPC
MCRPC
PennDOT
PennDOT D-1
Representative Tim Bonner
Greenville
AMT-Consulting
Hempfield
Greenville
City of Sharon
Mercer County
Senator Michele Brooks Office

Penn-Northwest
GPD Group
PennDot 1-0
PennDot 1-0
PennDot 1-4
West Middlesex Borough
Resident of Sharon
Sharpsville Borough

1. Mr. Coxe called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. **A quorum was present.**

2. Approval of Minutes of the April 30, 2024, MPO Coordinating Committee Meetings- Mr. Coxe asked if there were any additions, corrections, or deletions to the Minutes of the April 30, 2024 meeting. There being none, **Mr. Coxe asked for a motion to approve. Mr. Gary Hittle moved and Mr. Mike Nashtock seconded. The motion passed.**

3. 2023-2026 Highway/Bridge TIP Modifications and Informational Items (Matthew Crea, PennDOT CPDM)- Note: Information regarding these modifications will be posted to the “Mercer County MPO and Public Information” page of MCRPC’s website (within the “transportation” sub-section) at <https://mcrpc.com/transportation/mercer-county-mpo/>. There is a statewide administrative modification amendment. This is for an increase of \$1.6 million in State 581 funds on the construction phase of the Hill Road Project in federal fiscal years 2024, 2025, and 2026. The funding sources for this project were the Shenango Valley Highway Bridge Line Item, the Shenango Valley Safety Line Item, the PA 718 Bank to River Road Project, and the State Route 58 Main Street Bridge Project. This was a CPDM item that was submitted to the

central office and received CPDM approval back on March 20th.

The second action is a statewide amendment to add the Preliminary Engineering (PE) and Construction (CON) phases to the I-79 Plug Dam Project. For the federal fiscal year (FFY) 2024, \$125,000 in federal National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) funds have been allocated for the preliminary engineering phase, and \$1,310,000 in federal NHPP funds have been allocated for the construction phase. The funding source for these allocations is the interstate contingency line item. The electronic Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (eSTIP) will be managed by the interstate section. Both items discussed were for informational purposes and do not require a vote by the Shenango Valley MPO Coordinating Committee.

4. Discussion of 2023-2026 Transit TIP Modifications (SVATS MPO or COG staff) Mike Nashtock- We are moving older money from a line item that wasn't going to be used, to a different line item to upgrade the bus wash system which will require an electrical upgrade. The current bus wash system doesn't have a drying system and the new one will increase safety during the winter. Drying the buses before they leave the garage will reduce falls on the outer edge of the bus wash. No vote is required.

5. Final 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Discussion and Approval (Dan Gracenin, Chris Conti, SVATS MPO and Various PennDOT Staff)-

- a. Review of Public Comment Period Final Overview of TIP (all documents online)- There was no input from the public.
- b. Motions to Approve Final Documents-
 - I. Air Quality Conformity Report- The air quality report evaluates the impact of our highway, transit, bridge, and other related projects on air quality. The report determines whether these projects affect air quality positively or negatively. A motion to approve the Air Quality Conformity Report was made by Robert Lark and seconded by Paul Hamill. The motion passed.
 - II. Air Quality Resolution- Air quality meets requirements according to our program of projects. A motion was made by Paul Hamill to approve and seconded by Gary Hittle. The motion passed.
 - III. 2025 -2028 TIP- The TIP is the project listing for any transit, highway, etc., and includes all the documentation for the projects. A motion was made by Paul Hamill to approve and seconded by Gary Hittle. The motion passed.
 - IV. Self-Certification Resolution- States the federal rules are being followed in the way we program all of the federal dollars, and have open input opportunities. A motion was made by Robert Lark to approve and seconded by Paul Hamill. The motion passed.

Mr. Dan Gracenin thanked the PennDot District office, PennDot Central office, MCRPC staff, Cog, and the federal partners for working so diligently.

Mr. Chris Conti mentioned that past and current documents will remain available online for viewing.

Mr. Mark Nicholson, PennDOT, stated, "Even though we adopted the TIP regionally today, it still goes through the submittal process. We package together what's called a statewide transportation improvement program. Planning partners like the Shenango Valley and all those regions put together along with the interstate statewide TIPs into one large Pennsylvania improvement program that's submitted to Federal Highways, usually following the August State Transportation Commission meeting. After that, it's approved by the Secretary of Transportation. Then it's with Federal Highways, FTA, and EPA for their final review. Once they give their approval, it goes live on October 1st. I think some of you are familiar with this, but I wanted to clarify for informational purposes."

6. Project Update Summary-

- a. STU and TA Projects (Brian Barnhizer, SVATS MPO)
 - I. McKinley Avenue bridge replacement project- Progress on that project had been significantly slower than expected. PennDOT decided to bring the project in-house to get to the construction

phase using their engineers and staff. My understanding is that the municipal engineer Joe Kurtanich will still be involved and will be providing documentation as support for PennDOT's efforts to get the project done.

- II. The Route 58-18 intersection project in the Town of Greenville is currently out to bid. The bid award is expected to occur on July 11, 2024.
- III. The Springfield Township State Route 208 multi-modal path project, phase two is under construction and is expected to be completed by the end of July 2024.
- IV. The Service Avenue Bridge Replacement Project in Sharon. An engineer with Herbert Rowland and Grubic, (HRG), they're the engineering firm for the project reported that a scoping field view was completed in late April and they have prepared a preliminary layout for the replacement bridge and prepared a memo with the needed project design criteria for submission to PennDOT.
- V. The East State Street/ Pine Street project in Sharon. Jason Tomko with the City of Sharon informed me the city is in the process of acquiring right of way from property owners.
- VI. The engineering firm for Sharpsville's High Street project has reported that a pre-construction meeting will be held later today and the engineer expects construction to begin in August 2024. The planning director for the city of Hermitage reported that the pre-construction meeting for the Kelly Road project in Hermitage will also be held later today.

No questions were asked about the STU and TA projects.

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

- I. On July 11th, we have a few more projects that are going to let on that day: The State Route 18 Project through West Middlesex, the realignment of the Route 18-4006 intersection, the State Route 2014 bridge over Wolf Creek in addition to the Thiel College project.
- II. Modifications for the I-79/I-80 patching contract. Crews will be doing interstate patching and some joint replacement on some of the bridges, the plug dams that are scheduled to let later in August and that work will probably carry into next year.
- III. Two local bridge projects, Gilmore and Hosack, are both progressing through final design and right-of-way acquisition and are both scheduled to let this year.
- IV. The 518 Paving Project through Hermitage and Sharpsville is moving along and the Lamor Road project is moving through design coordination. Those two projects are going along well.
- V. The reconstruction of five miles of I-80 from the Ohio Line permit will be submitted promptly.
- VI. Construction of the State Route 318 bridge over Interstate 376 is progressing well with no current delays. They're moving forward with getting the bridge decking in place for that project. They're scheduled to have the interchange fully open to traffic by October 5th.

Mr. Dale Perry, speaking as a citizen and not on behalf of West Middlesex or Shenango Township, suggested that the area should be designated as active transportation and walk works friendly due to the high volume of pedestrian traffic on State Route 18 and near the West Middlesex School District.

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

- I. 2024 Traffic Counts: PennDOT and expected Municipal counts. MCRPC was tasked

with performing 50 traffic counts this year, 30 of which, are completed. Jason Tomko of the City of Sharon would like an intersection study conducted once the PennDot traffic counts are finished.

- II. 2024 HPMS Reviews- There are 120 sites around Mercer County. The reviews are expected to continue with Chris Conti and Peter Messina helping.

Dan Gracenin commented that the traffic counts are likely to be removed from the work program next year due to staffing and aging equipment. Dan explained some of the equipment vendors are no longer producing new equipment or are shutting down completely.

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

- a. PennDOT- Brandon Leach, PennDot Central Office. The STIP, State Transportation Improvement Project, public comment period started June 18, 2024, and will end July 3, 2024. The STIP has the project listings for the state and is another opportunity for people to comment on the projects. Mr. Leach also discussed NEVI, the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program, which has had a couple of funding rounds. The current round of funding is 1B and is building out the alternative fuel corridor system in Pennsylvania, which is all the interstates, as well as a couple of larger U.S routes serving higher numbers of electric vehicle travel based on EV registrations per zip code. That funding opportunity will close on July 10, 2024.
- b. FHWA/FTA- Ronnique Bishop- Ms. Bishop discussed Dale Perry's comment about active transportation. There is a NOFO called the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program, also known as ATIP, and the application deadline has been extended to July 17, 2024. There are other NOFOs available, including funding for charging and fueling infrastructure, also known as the CFI grant program. There is the SMART, Strengthening Mobility and Revolutionizing Transportation grants program. Another option is the Safe Streets and Roads for All Planning and Demonstration Grants which are due August 29, 2024.

8. Additional Discussion- No additional discussion.

9. Adjournment- A motion to adjourn was made by Robert Lark and seconded by Gary Hittle at 11:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Daniel M. Gracenin,
MPO Secretary