

**CENTRE COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CCMPO)  
COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, November 27, 2007  
6:00 pm  
College Township Municipal Building**

**Minutes**

**Voting Members Present:**

Ron Buckalew	Centre Regional Planning Commission (CRPC)
Bob Corman	Penns Valley Planning Region
John Elnitski	Benner Township
Elizabeth Goreham	State College Borough
Dan Klees, Chair	College Township
Karen Michael (for Kevin Kline)	PennDOT District 2-0 Office
Chris Lee	Harris Township
Jeff Luck	Patton Township
George Pytel	Ferguson Township
Jadine Reese	Upper Bald Eagle Planning Region
John Saylor	Centre County
Jack Shannon	Moshannon Valley Planning Region
Tom TenEyck	PennDOT Central Office
John Spychalski	Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA)

**Non-Voting Members Present:**

Rob Cooper	Penn State University
Frank Halderman	Bellefonte Borough

**Others Present:**

Bob Crum	Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA)
Tom Zilla	CRPA
Trish Meek	CRPA
Greg Kausch	CRPA
Lori Shingler	CRPA – Recording Secretary
Mike Bloom	Centre County Planning and Community Development
Bob Jacobs	Centre County Planning and Community Development
Hugh Mose	CATA
Michelle Barbin	Mountaintop Region
Brian St. John	McCormick, Taylor and Associates
Brian Ranck	Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission
Mike Glazer	Representative Peterson's Office
Mike Joseph	Centre Daily Times
Emily Gette-Doyle	Moshannon Valley Economic Development Partnership
Anne Glaser	Citizen
Diane Gregg	Citizen
George Khoury	Citizen
Amy Farkas	Harris Township

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### 1. Call to Order

Mr. Klees called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m. and led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

### 2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Lee suggested that the Coordinating Committee minutes of September 25, 2007, page 10, paragraph 3, sentence 3 be changed to read as follows: "He thought that adding capacity stimulates demand."

*Mr. Luck made a motion to approve the September 25, 2007 Coordinating Committee minutes, with this correction. Mr. Saylor seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.*

### 3. Citizens' Comments

There were no citizen comments.

### 4. Transportation Enhancements/Home Town Streets/Safe Routes to School Program

#### a. Philipsburg Front Street Streetscape Phase II

Ms. Emily Gette-Doyle of the Moshannon Valley Economic Development Partnership (MVEDP) updated the Committee on the Front Street Streetscape Project. She said that a three-block section is in the final stages of the enhancement project. Planning for the project began in 2002, with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) and Transportation Enhancements (TE) funding.

The enhancement project experienced some setbacks, due in part to Philipsburg Borough delaying their sewer/storm water project. In 2005, the MPO approved a redirection of almost \$100,000 in TE money from the Presqueisle Street sidewalk project to the installation of a traffic signal on Front Street. Over the course of planning and design work, the MPO awarded the project additional funds, bringing the total CDBG and TE funding to \$940,545. The project was let in the fall of 2006.

Ms. Gette-Doyle explained that the project area features new sidewalks, curbs, traffic calming measures and relocated utility lines. Street furnishings are currently on order, and trees will be planted in the spring. She said that this enhancement project has made a big difference in Philipsburg, and she thanked the MPO for their generosity.

#### b. South Atherton Street Path Cost Increase

Ms. Meek reported that the South Atherton Street Path is essentially complete at this time. She stated that as of August 2007, there was \$314,600 in federal TE funds on the TIP for this project. The project was bid and awarded, but unanticipated issues were encountered during construction; these caused cost overruns in the amount of \$33,500. Harris Township has requested additional funding in the amount of \$22,000 to cover these overruns. Ms. Meek explained that the additional funds can be reprogrammed from a balance remaining for the Puddintown Rail Project, which is complete at this time.

Ms. Meek noted that a TE Review Committee meeting was held, and this Committee recommended approving the additional \$22,000 as requested. The Technical Committee reviewed the information and recommended that the project receive \$30,000 in additional federal funds, with the extra amount to serve as a contingency to buffer against any additional cost overruns.

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Ms. Goreham asked if the Puddintown Road project would be jeopardized in any way by depleting the balance of additional funding. Ms. Meek said that staff had this concern as well, because the project has not gone through the final audit. She said that a cushion of \$20,000 would remain for the Puddintown project to cover any unanticipated expenses.

*Mr. Pytel made a motion to amend the Centre County 2007-2010 Centre County TIP to transfer \$30,000 in federal funds from the Puddintown Road Trail Project to the South Atherton Street Path project. Mr. Buckalew seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

### **c. Projects for 2009-2012 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Meek stated that the MPO has been awarded additional TE funds for new projects, to be programmed in fiscal years 2009 and 2010. \$630,000 will be made available over these two years. There will be no statewide application cycle. Centre County is unique in that there are no new projects for the funding.

In September, staff recommended advancing the two highest ranked projects that remained unfunded from the 2005-06 funding cycle. These are the Centre Hall Sidewalk Rehabilitation Project (\$441,578) and the Village of Boalsburg Streetscape Improvements (\$172,787). Following that meeting, staff met with the sponsors for each project and emphasized that there would be no additional funds available beyond this \$630,000. Both projects are easily scaled back if projected costs exceed the initial estimates from 2005-06.

The next steps are to amend the 2007-2010 TIP to include these two projects, and also to include them in the new 2009-2012 TIP. The Technical Committee recommended approving these actions.

Mr. Pytel asked what would happen if one of these projects could not advance. Ms. Meek said that the MPO would need to find another project that could be moved quickly in order to retain the funds. She added that the MPO could accomplish this by holding another competitive cycle or by finding another way to solicit projects. Mr. Pytel said that the second half of the Pine Grove Mills Streetscape project is in need of funding. Mr. Klees thought it would be logical to consider existing projects first.

Mr. Buckalew noted that these two projects were the highest ranked, but he assumed that there were others behind them. Ms. Meek said there were a total of five unfunded applications. Two of the sponsors withdrew their projects from consideration, and the third was an add-on to the existing State College Borough Streetscape project. That latter project is going to proceed more quickly than the Centre Hall and Boalsburg projects, and is on target for completion in 2009.

Mr. Cooper noted that the estimates for these projects were at least two years old. Ms. Meek affirmed this fact, and noted that both project sponsors are aware that they will likely have to scale back their projects to account for growth in labor and materials costs.

*Mr. Pytel made a motion as follows:*

- *That the Centre Hall Sidewalk Rehabilitation Project and the Village of Boalsburg Streetscape Improvements advance using Centre County's TE funding allocation for the 2009-2012 TIP, and*

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- *That the 2007-2010 TIP be amended to include the Centre Hall Sidewalk Rehabilitation Project and the Village of Boalsburg Streetscape Improvements, using funding from the TE line item in 2009 and 2010, in order to allow the project sponsors to execute reimbursement agreements with PennDOT and begin design activities.*

*Mr. Corman seconded the motion, which was unanimously approved.*

### 5. I-80 Toll Conversion Project

Mr. Brian Ranck of the Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission explained that the I-80 toll conversion project was initiated by Act 44. The Act authorizes PennDOT to lease I-80 to the Turnpike Commission for a period of 50 years, and provides a minimum of \$83 billion for investment in transportation over the term of the lease. Moreover, PennDOT will be able to save the approximately \$80 million that they spend annually to maintain I-80 and invest this money elsewhere. He noted that the amount of federal transportation funding allocated to Pennsylvania would not be decreased as a result of tolling the interstate. Mr. Ranck said that there are two components to Act 44. One is the tolling of I-80, where all toll revenue is required to go back into the interstate for reconstruction and maintenance. The second part would increase tolls on the existing turnpike system, with the additional revenue put toward additional highway and bridge projects and transit agencies throughout the state.

Mr. Lee asked if it was correct that no money from the tolling of I-80 would be going to urban transit systems. Mr. Ranck said that was correct.

Mr. Ranck said that prior to implementing tolls on I-80, the Turnpike Commission must seek approval from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). The Phase I application was submitted in October, and the Commission awaiting a reply. The Phase II application will be submitted in the spring or summer of 2008. The Commission plans to have tolling in place by 2010.

Under Act 44, the Commission is permitted to install up to ten toll plazas along the 311-mile I-80 corridor. The estimated toll rate would be eight cents per mile for cars and thirty cents per mile for trucks. This would increase by three percent annually. At the same time, the Commission is also considering I-80 safety and operational improvements, including truck climbing lanes and bridge construction. Public input is being sought for these improvements.

The tolls provide an adequate long-term funding source for highway and bridge reconstruction and maintenance throughout the state. Mr. Ranck said that none of the revenue was intended to add capacity or build new roads.

To date, the Turnpike Commission has met with several MPOs and RPOs, the media, Commonwealth residents and business leaders. During these meetings, several concerns have been raised. Some of the concerns that will be studied closely include traffic diversions, toll rates, and economic impacts on rural communities.

Ms. Goreham explained that transportation funding is at a crisis state nationwide. User fees are going to be the one of the emerging ways to fill in the gaps in funding. She said that she supports I-80 tolling.

Mr. Elnitski expressed concern about the cost to emergency response agencies serving the interstates and adjacent state highways. He has heard that Act 44 will provide fire and ambulance companies with a per-response payment. Mr. Ranck believed there was a yearly stipend that would be given out, plus a per-call rate. Mr. Klees asked that this information be shared with the MPO.

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Mr. Luck asked what percentage of the tolls collected on I-80 will actually go to PennDOT. Mr. Ranck did not know the percentage, but explained that the total amount would be at least \$83.3 billion over the 50 year lease. Mr. Luck then asked how much of the money from the existing turnpike goes back into maintenance and operation of that system. Mr. Ranck said that the budget per year right now is just about \$300 million, which includes the amount reinvested back into the road. The projected annual budget for what is going to be put back into the road over the next ten years is \$450-\$500 million.

Mr. Luck asked if tolling was a more expensive way of raising revenue than the existing mechanism for gas taxation. Mr. Ranck explained that there would be up front capital and operating costs to implement tolling, but this is one of the things that the legislature considered when they debated Act 44.

Mr. Cooper mentioned the prospect of the Turnpike Commission taking responsibility for the I-99/I-80 interchanges in Marion and Walker Townships. Mr. Ranck said that in 2010, the Turnpike Commission will take over the operations of I-80. Between now and then, PennDOT is continuing the yearly maintenance. It is expected that by the end of the year, PennDOT will come up with a list of projects that they are going to continue to the point when tolling starts. After that point, the Turnpike Commission will be responsible for any projects. Some of the safety improvements and bridge upgrades will also be done by the Commission as part of the initial phases of implementing tolling.

Mr. Lee expressed an understanding that the money generated by tolling would not be allocated by the MPO. Ms. Michael said that Act 44 funding will be reflected on the TIP, even though it is state money. The funding is dedicated, however. Mr. Zilla said that staff's understanding is that the MPO will have to be involved in some fashion, but staff has no experience with the current tolling systems, so they will be talking to their counterparts to see how this issue is handled along the existing Turnpike system. Mr. Lee thought it was advantageous to have the funding come through the MPO so that local constituents have some involvement in the allocation process.

Mr. Pytel noted that the MPO supported this proposal because additional transportation funding has to be obtained somewhere. However, he asked what mechanism is in place to keep this revenue from going to Philadelphia and Pittsburgh. Mr. Ranck said that there is a lease in place, and payments will be made to PennDOT, who will assume responsibility for distributing the money.

Ms. Reese asked if the dollar amount going to PennDOT is a set percentage. Mr. Ranck thought that it is a set minimum, and that there could be additional payments made to PennDOT based on the actual level of toll revenue realized.

Mr. Corman said that in Ohio, truck tolls are based on axle weights. Mr. Ranck explained that this would be the case in Pennsylvania as well.

Mr. Corman asked if the existing I-80 rest stops would be expanded to full plazas. Mr. Ranck said that was not planned, although parking may be expanded and new rest stops may be constructed as needed.

Mr. Shannon expressed concerns about diversion of vehicles from I-80 onto adjacent state and local roads once tolls are established, explaining that these adjacent roads are not built for large traffic volumes. He was also concerned about adverse economic impacts to communities along the I-80 corridor. He asked if there has been any response from PSATS regarding I-80 tolling. Mr. Ranck said there has been no direct contact from PSATS. Mr. Klees explained that PSATS was involved in the legislative process, but has not been involved since then.

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Mr. Halderman asked when the Commission would determine the location of toll plazas. Mr. Ranck said they were now reviewing where it makes the most sense to put plazas from an engineering and environmental standpoint. He anticipated that this information would be available for the next set of public meetings, currently scheduled for March. Mr. Lee asked if there were set criteria for choosing locations, specifically whether these would be placed so as to minimize the burden on local commuters who use I-80. Mr. Ranck said that the interstate was 311 miles long and up to ten tolling booths are going to be permitted. Therefore, toll gantries would be placed approximately 30 miles apart.

Mr. Klees asked how definitive the diversion planning and location studies were going to be. He asked if the Commission was going to take input from municipalities along the corridor. Mr. Ranck said that they wanted input from everyone along the corridor. However, he recognized that the final plan would likely not satisfy all constituents.

Mr. Klees referred to the transit bank and the first couple of payments to PennDOT. He asked how these bonds would be repaid. Mr. Ranck said they are being repaid from existing turnpike revenue.

Mr. Mike Glazer from Congressman John Peterson's office said that everyone realizes that funding must be found for transportation. He said that this tolling plan is not a "done deal" until approved by the FHWA. Congressman Peterson's office is working hard to turn back the tolling plan at the FHWA level. He explained that Governor Rendell had initially supported leasing the existing turnpike to a private corporation to raise funds, but this was changed by Act 44. He wondered what pressures were put on the Governor to change his mind. If Act 44 goes into effect, the Turnpike Commission will have twice the power it has now.

Mr. Glazer reported that Morgan Stanley completed a study that found \$1.6 billion annually would be put into the transportation system in the state immediately via a lease of the existing Turnpike. It will take many years to realize that level of funding through tolls on I-80.

Mr. Glazer noted that every single chamber of commerce from the Ohio border to the Poconos has sent letters to the Department of Transportation denouncing the I-80 tolling plan. These are people who best know the state of businesses along the corridor.

Mr. Klees said that the MPO members are not resigned to tolling I-80. However, in developing the LRTP, there were over 100 candidate projects and only about 54 of them could be programmed through 2030. He said that the financial difficulties are a challenge. Mr. Glazer said that he understands these difficulties. He said that I-80 is not like the Turnpike, which runs through a very populated and wealthy part of the state. Tolls will impact I-80 differently.

Mr. Elnitski asked if there is information available relative to the level of in-state versus out-of-state traffic on I-80. Mr. Brian St. John of McCormick Taylor and Associates explained that Wilbur-Smith is working to calculate those percentages, and they will be reported with the diversion studies. Mr. Elnitski asked if there were ways to give tax incentives to businesses locating along the corridor, to offset the negative effects of tolling. Mr. Glazer said that it was against the interstate commerce laws to give in-state residents a break on tolls, but he did not know about state taxes.

Mr. Cooper asked for further detail on volume discounts under this plan, and whether that would solve the commuter problem. Mr. Ranck said that on the Turnpike, a discount is offered to commercial traffic. They will be looking at several programs along I-80 to help commuters.

**6. 2007-2010 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

**a. PennDOT Bridge Project Priorities**

Mr. Zilla reported that the bridge priorities list will help with some of the action items that follow. This list was included with the agenda packet.

Page one of the list shows the new priorities as identified by PennDOT. Mr. Zilla explained that all of these bridges are structurally deficient, but none are currently posted. He said that five of these are proposed for addition to the current TIP, and five would also be proposed for the new TIP. He said that five are included in the LRTP, and six are proposed to be added to that document.

Page two of the list includes eight bridges that will be carried forward from the current TIP to the new TIP. All of these are structurally deficient (SD). Six of the bridges are posted, one is closed and one does not have any restrictions. Mr. Zilla pointed out that the Route 45 bridge will be carried forward to the new TIP because part of the money needs to be carried forward, but the project will be let and moved during the current TIP period.

Mr. Zilla explained that three bridges are proposed to be removed from the current TIP because of changes in PennDOT's bridge priorities. Two of these are structurally deficient, and all three are included on the LRTP.

Mr. Luck asked about the specific nature of the change in priorities that led to the recommendation to remove the last three bridges from the current TIP. Ms. Michael explained that these do not come to the top of the list given the current risk assessment. PennDOT is attempting to take care of the worst bridges first, hence the addition of bridges to the current and new TIPs.

Ms. Reese asked how local municipalities are informed about these priorities. Mr. Zilla said that a MPO meeting report is distributed following each meeting on actions that occur. In the past, staff has solicited input from each individual municipality, but since this list was just received, staff did not have the opportunity to do that. Ms. Reese said that rural municipalities are sometimes unaware of how bridges are added to and dropped from the list. She explained that it is important that either staff or PennDOT take the time to inform municipalities of this.

Mr. Klees asked if all bridges on the list are state-owned. Ms. Michael explained that some of the bridges on the list are local, although all three bridges proposed to be dropped from the list are state-owned.

Mr. Zilla explained that Mr. Bloom is going to work on a process for handling local bridges. PennDOT has handled the state issues, but staff needs to take the lead on the local bridges. Communicating with the municipalities will be an important part of that process.

Ms. Farkas of Harris Township referred to the Rock Hill Road Bridge over Mackey Run. She noted that it is on the list for a culvert box replacement and also for preliminary design. Ms. Michael explained that both activities are part of the same project. Ms. Farkas informed the MPO that Harris Township passed an official statement on this bridge, noting the Township's concern about replacement because it has the potential to have a detrimental effect on the village of Linden Hall. The Township would like context sensitive design to be used in the replacement process, and they would like the Pennsylvania Historical Museum Commission (PHMC) involved from the beginning. Ms. Michael said that PennDOT is aware of the concerns and will set up a meeting to discuss options.

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### **b. Amendments to Add Act 44 Projects**

Mr. Zilla reported that with the first payments of Act 44 revenue in 2008, changes must be made to the current TIP to incorporate this new funding for projects. He reviewed the new funding amounts as well as the focus of each.

A map was presented showing the projects proposed for addition to the 2007-2010 TIP as a result of Act 44 funding:

- SR 4002 bridge over North Fork Beech Creek, Snow Shoe Township – preliminary engineering (\$300,000)
- SR 1002 bridge over Little Marsh Creek, Boggs Township – box culvert construction (\$150,000)
- SR 2006 bridge over Mackey Run, Harris Township – box culvert construction and preliminary engineering (\$225,000)
- SR 45 bridge over Spruce Creek, Ferguson Township – preliminary engineering (\$75,000)
- SR 3017 bridge over Bald Eagle Creek, Port Matilda Borough – preliminary engineering (\$225,000)

Mr. Zilla explained that two other line items are also being proposed:

- Pavement restoration on various state routes with poor International Roughness Index (IRI) ratings (\$2,000,000)
- Bridge preservation/maintenance on state bridges (\$455,000)

Ms. Michael explained the bridge preservation/maintenance process and funding, noting that PennDOT uses this line item to perform work on SD bridges that will extend the life of the bridge. She also provided examples of work to be done with the pavement restoration line item.

*Mr. Spsychalski made a motion to approve the proposed amendments to the 2007-2010 Centre County TIP to add projects funded with Act 44 revenue, as outlined above. Mr. Pytel seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

### **c. Amendments to Meet Federal Year of Expenditure (YOE) Regulations**

Mr. Zilla explained that the new Federal Statewide and Metropolitan Transportation Planning regulations include a stipulation that the MPO must account for revenue growth and cost inflation in project estimates, and that the phases of each project must be illustrated on the TIP and LRTP in the year in which the expenditure is anticipated.

Staff received guidance regarding this issue in September, and this guidance set the “base year” as 2008. Accordingly, PennDOT has updated the costs for each project to reflect 2008 dollars. An escalation factor of four percent will be added to project costs each year, and annual revenue growth projections will be escalated between 1.5 and 4 percent, depending on funding stream.

Mr. Zilla explained that on the LRTP, the MPO is permitted to use “cost bands”, or year periods, and the Centre County LRTP does this. Costs are escalated approximately 2.5 percent per year, which is less than the 4 percent stipulated in the YOE regulations. The LRTP is going to be updated in 2008, concurrent with the new TIP. This LRTP update will need to reflect both new Act 44 projects and the YOE adjustments. Mr. Zilla stated that the LRTP would not technically be in compliance with YOE regulations after December 11, 2007. Staff has raised this issue with FHWA, and their direction is to make sure that the current TIP is compliant so there is no risk of denial of potential amendments.

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Mr. Zilla noted that there are buffers built into the LRTP. These include betterment and bridge line items in each four-year period. Staff noted these buffers to FHWA, and their feeling is that this is an acceptable practice until the LRTP is updated in 2008.

The YOE regulations require adjustments to project costs and schedules in years 2009 and 2010 of the current TIP. Transit capital costs were adjusted, but operating costs are included on the TIP as the maximum available grant funding, so there is no way to escalate those costs. The Highway Element has been adjusted in terms of cost and schedule to maintain fiscal constraint for each year. Amendments also reflect the addition of some of the new high priority bridge projects and removal of the three lower priority bridge projects. This is necessary to maintain fiscal constraint.

Reviewing key changes to the Highway Element, Mr. Zilla explained that the Wingate Betterment project is moving, and the schedule is being advanced. The Old Fort Betterment project schedule must be extended into the new TIP. Money will be moved out of the betterment line item to these projects to cover cost escalations.

On the Bridge Element, the Penns Creek Bridge is moving, and the schedule has been advanced. The Moshannon Creek Bridge schedule must be extended to the new TIP. There are three projects for which only cost adjustments are required. Penns Creek Bridge (SR 2009), Mill Race Bridge and Laurel Run Bridge will be removed from the TIP.

Mr. Corman referred to the Old Fort Betterment project, and said that he hoped it would be scheduled in early 2009 because of the housing development that will be constructed in that area and resulting availability of developer funds. Mr. Zilla replied that he has discussed this with PennDOT staff, and they are aware that the betterment project must be coordinated with the development. He is under the impression that the traffic study for that development is currently being updated. Ms. Michael noted that the project is scheduled for March 2009, and PennDOT staff is to meet with the developer later this week.

*Mr. Pytel made a motion to approve the proposed amends to the 2007-2010 Centre County TIP to address Year of Expenditure (YOE) adjustments. Ms. Goreham seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

### **d. Amendments to Transit Element**

Mr. Zilla stated that two new projects are proposed to be added to the current TIP:

- Addition of \$155,000 in federal funds to year 2008 for improvements to the CATA Operations and Maintenance Facility and the CATA downtown State College office, including but not limited to: stormwater management facility improvements, sidewalks and other pedestrian amenities, lighting, and landscaping. Other projects on the TIP are not affected by the amendment, because the funds are an additional allocation of federal flex funds being provided by PennDOT.
- Addition of \$120,000 in state funds to year 2008 for improvements to the CATA Operations and Maintenance Facility (interior office, shop, and maintenance equipment). Other projects on the TIP are not affected by the amendment, because the funds are an additional allocation of state Capital Bond funds being provided by PennDOT.

Mr. Zilla said that these amendments would not affect any other projects because they are covered by an influx of new funds.

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*Mr. Lee made a motion to approve the proposed amendments to the Transit Element of the 2007-2010 Centre County TIP. Mr. Buckalew seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

### **e. Amendments to Highway Element**

Mr. Zilla explained that staff had addressed the potential for this action item at the September meeting when the Borough provided an update on their TE project, which is part of the larger project to realign South Fraser Street. The Borough is still seeking state or federal funding to complete the street realignment. An earmark was included in the preliminary appropriations bill, but did not make it into the final bill. The Borough wants to preserve its eligibility to use any state or federal funds that become available, which means that the project must be shown on the TIP and LRTP. Staff is proposing that the preliminary engineering phase be added to the current TIP, using 100 percent local funds. No other projects would be affected.

*Mr. Pytel made a motion to approve an amendment to the 2007-2010 Centre County TIP to add the preliminary engineering phase of the West Beaver Avenue/South Fraser Street Intersection Realignment and Safety Improvement Project, using 100% local funds to be provided by State College Borough. Mr. Lee seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

## **7. PennDOT District 2-0 Regional Operations Plan (ROP)**

Mr. Zilla noted that the consultant team presented the ROP to the Committee at the September meeting. The ROP sets the stage for implementing PennDOT's Transportation Systems Operations Plan (TSOP). Appropriate District 2-0 ROP projects are proposed for inclusion in the LRTP and the 2009-2012 TIP. Mr. Zilla reviewed the short- and long-term projects that are applicable to Centre County.

Mr. Lee asked about the purpose of the ramp closure gates on I-80. Mr. Zilla said that one of the desired outcomes highlighted by the weather events that occurred last year was the ability to close certain facilities to keep motorists from being stranded.

Mr. Lee asked if real time traveler information would be available for CATA. Mr. Mose replied that it would.

Mr. Zilla explained that the Technical recommended "acceptance" (rather than adoption) of the ROP. They also asked that the Coordinating Committee give consideration to conveying the uncertainties relative to how the I-80 toll conversion project may affect the funding and implementation of some of the ROP projects in that corridor.

Mr. Lee recognized that the ROP involved more operations than policy. He asked how the study was funded. Ms. Michael said that it was developed by PennDOT to identify projects that could be incorporated into the LRTP and TIP.

*Mr. Buckalew made a motion to accept the PennDOT District 2-0 ROP and convey to PennDOT the concern about the uncertainties relative to how the I-80 toll conversion will impact the funding and implementation of ROP projects on I-80. Mr. Elnitski seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

## **8. 2009-2012 Centre County TIP**

Mr. Zilla explained that actions pertaining to this agenda item will need to be taken in January, concluding with the adoption of the TIP in June or July of 2008.

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The four-year allocation in the new TIP is a little over \$50 million. Act 44 funding in the amount of \$15,713,000 is added to that amount. This includes all funding streams, some of which carry limitations. Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds are eligible for a wide range of projects. National Highway System (NHS) funds can only be used on roads designated as part of that system (US Routes 322 and 220, and I-80). CMAQ funds must be used for projects that have congestion and air quality impacts, and Safety funds are focused on projects that have a positive impact on the safety goals that PennDOT and the MPO have established.

Mr. Zilla reviewed the TIP adoption schedule, noting that in January the MPO should approve the submission of a Preliminary Draft TIP. PennDOT will provide comments on this draft by the end of February. The Final Draft TIP must be adopted and submitted by June.

The top priority for this TIP cycle is to obtain funding to construct the local access interchange, which is the first of the two needed to connect I-99 with I-80. The current cost of this project is \$43 million. Staff has assumed that the MPO would like to request spike funding for this project, but would like some further clarification of this assumption by Coordinating Committee members.

*Mr. Lee made a motion to request spike funding for the construction of the I-99/I-80 local access interchange. Mr. Pytel seconded and the motion passed unanimously.*

Mr. Zilla reviewed the proposed Safety and CMAQ projects, all of which are carryovers from the current TIP:

- Route 26 Pine Grove Mountain
- Route 322 Potter Township
- Route 350 Sandy Ridge Mountain
- Whitehall Road/University Drive turning lane
- North Atherton Street Signal improvements
- Route 150 Congested Corridor Improvement Project

Mr. Lee noted that this agenda item will have the most direct effect on the future of transportation in Centre County. He recognized that these projects are all carryovers, which suggests that the MPO is not doing the comprehensive, coordinated planning that everyone agrees must happen. He asked when this could occur, with new initiatives and policymakers being involved from the start of the process. He asked if this might be the 2010 LRTP update. Mr. Zilla explained that the MPO went through this process with the current adopted LRTP, and it will be done again during the major LRTP update starting in 2009.

Mr. Lee asked if a majority of the current projects would be cleared off the TIP by 2010 so that the MPO could begin looking at the bigger picture. Mr. Zilla explained that the biggest advantage the MPO will have in the new LRTP will be that all I-99 projects, with the exception of the interchanges, will be off the books. This will give policymakers more flexibility with major new projects (SCCCTS, Corridor O). He thought that some of the other projects will be completed, but the construction phase for others would probably still be on the next LRTP. Mr. Lee said that this would not prevent the MPO from a planning process that involves geography and demography. Mr. Zilla stated that members will be able to start over again if that is what they want to do.

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Mr. Lee noted that the starting point of the planning process should not be lists of projects included or not included on the LRTP. Rather, the starting point should be a decision of where we want communities and growth. Mr. Crum explained that the comprehensive plans for Centre County and the Centre Region address many of these issues, and provides a good foundation for linking community land use planning with future transportation planning. He noted that the LRTP is one chapter of the Centre County Comprehensive Plan, so demography, geography, environmental and community analyses are included in that document.

Betterment projects include:

- Route 26 Beaver Avenue
- Route 45 Old Fort
- Route 26/64 Pleasant Gap to Zion (this did not make it on to the current TIP)
- Route 550 Bishop Street (construction phase)

Mr. Zilla reviewed the bridge priorities, stating that there are 18 bridges on a preliminary list for the new TIP. The proposed new TIP would ideally include a Box Culvert and Bridge Maintenance/Preservation line items as well.

On the Transit element of the TIP, several initiatives are proposed:

- Rolling stock rebuild and new purchases
- Advanced technologies
- Service restoration and expansion
- Rideshare, vanpool efforts
- Opportunities related to Act 44 revenue

Mr. Lee asked if there were any prospects for a fare buy-down. Mr. Mose explained that CATA is pursuing a fare buy-down pilot project with State College Borough.

Mr. Zilla reviewed CMAQ funding, noting that staff is discussing a potential line item set aside for public transit projects, the potential for a more formal selection process, and the potential expansion of Park and Ride projects using CMAQ funds.

Next steps include an investigation of whether new projects can be included on the new TIP within the limits of fiscal constraint. Mr. Zilla said that this looks unlikely. Moreover, transit projects on the TIP will need to be assessed relative to Act 44 revenue. The Preliminary Draft TIP must be developed, within the limits of fiscal constraint, for the January meeting.

### **9. FY 2008-2009 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Mr. Zilla noted that the UPWP for the next fiscal year (2008-2009) must be adopted at the end of February. For the past couple of years, staff has initiated discussion of the UPWP with the MPO beginning in November. This document lists tasks to be performed by staff and important actions to be taken by the MPO. He reviewed tasks in the base UPWP, many of which carry over from year to year:

- Administer 2009-2012 TIP
- Participate in TIP projects
- Implement changes from MPO performance review
- Participate in “smart transportation” and “right-sizing” efforts
- Collect traffic data, including before and after I-99 opens

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- Initiate LRTP major update
- Update Coordinated Public Transit Human Services Transportation Plan
- Manage Transportation Enhancements Program
- Advance transit projects
- Respond to special initiatives (I-80 interchange, I-80 toll conversion)

There are two supplemental planning projects in the current UPWP. Task VII.A. is Coordinate Land Use and Transportation Planning, focused on areas in Halfmoon/Patton Townships and Bellefonte/Spring Townships. Task VII.B. is the Assessment of Public Transportation Services in Centre County. This was a response to a request from Centre County to evaluate a full range of issues and alternative models for integrating service provided by CATA and the County Office of Transportation. Both of these projects are currently in the early stages.

Mr. Zilla reviewed other possible supplemental planning funds projects to consider for the 2008-09 UPWP:

- Continue coordination of land use and transportation plans
- Update socioeconomic forecasts and travel demand model
- Prepare detailed inventory of municipal bridges
- Purchase equipment (plotter, new laptop, etc.)
- Update 1998 CATA Public Transportation Plan

Mr. Zilla noted that one of the important elements of the planning priorities letter is that it states that up to 25 percent over the base allocation of federal planning funds can be requested. This would be on a one-time basis only for this upcoming fiscal year. The PennDOT Central Office is currently conducting a study of MPO funding statewide to see if funding is being distributed according to needs and desires. Based on the findings of that study, there may be changes in the next UPWP relative to the way in which funding is provided to MPOs for staff activities. Staff intends to take advantage of these changes and show additional revenue.

Mr. Zilla suggested that members discuss their priorities for supplemental planning projects so that staff can prepare a draft UPWP for MPO review in January.

Mr. Lee said that he agreed with the list that was presented. Mr. Sychalski noted that he would review the update of the 1998 CATA Public Transportation Plan with the CATA Board.

Mr. Klees explained that it is difficult to identify new projects given that the current projects are not finished. Mr. Zilla agreed that staff is somewhat limited in that there is only so much that they can accomplish in any given year. He noted that funding for the current projects will likely need to be extended because they will not be completed by the end of June.

Mr. Elnitski asked what the detailed inventory of municipal bridges entailed. Mr. Zilla explained that it would be a list of locally-owned bridges that details their current condition. Mr. Bloom added that he envisioned a smaller version of the statewide bridge assessment.

Mr. Saylor noted that many years ago, Centre County hired engineers to inspect municipal bridges each year. Ms. Michael said that this practice still occurs; each municipality is still expected to evaluate their own bridges and send that information to PennDOT. Mr. Klees asked if it made sense for the state to develop a front-end program for municipalities or counties to plug in their information. Ms. Michael explained that has not been a high enough priority for PennDOT staff because they are focused on state bridges.

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Mr. Lee asked if the updated forecasts could be put off for a year and still be available when the LRTP needed to be updated. Mr. Crum said that this is not likely, given the very time-intensive nature of the effort.

Mr. Zilla suggested that staff prepare more information about the top three projects on the list, and talk with CATA about a potential update of their Public Transportation Plan. He said one idea would be to use the one-time additional funding for continuing the land use/transportation coordination project. Supplemental funding could then be used for updating the forecast data and/or an inventory of local bridges. He said these ideas, and others, could be discussed further in January.

**10. Announcements**

Mr. Klees reviewed the announcements listed in the agenda.

**11. Adjourn**

The meeting adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Shingler  
Recording Secretary