

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

**Tuesday, April 24, 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
Chris Price (for Chris Exarchos)	Centre County
Elizabeth Goreham, Vice Chair	State College Borough
Dan Klees, Chair	College Township
Kevin Kline	PennDOT District 2-0 Office
Chris Lee	Harris Township
Jeff Luck	Patton Township
Bob Neff	Halfmoon Township
George Pytel	Ferguson Township
Frank Royer	Spring Township
Dean Roberts (for Tom TenEyck)	PennDOT Central Office
John Spychalski	Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA)

Non-Voting Members Present:

Frank Halderman	Bellefonte Borough
Matt Smoker	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)

Others Present:

Bob Crum	Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA)
Tom Zilla	CRPA
Greg Kausch	CRPA
Lori Shingler	CRPA – Recording Secretary
Mike Bloom	Centre County Planning and Community Development Office
Jim Eckert	Senator Jake Corman’s Office
Mike Joseph	Centre Daily Times
Hugh Mose	CATA
Lynn Herman	Pennsylvania House Representative
Michelle Barbin	MPO Technical Committee
Jon Eich	Citizen

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.

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2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Pytel made a motion to approve the March 27, 2007 Coordinating Committee minutes. Mr. Buckalew seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.

3. Citizens' Comments

There were no citizen comments.

4. Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2007 Update: Draft Plan Elements

Ms. Meek stated that final rulemaking for SAFETEA-LU was received on February 14, 2007. There are five compliance items:

1. Environmental Mitigation
2. Consultation with Resource Agencies
3. Consistency of Plan with Planned Growth and Development Plans
4. Operational and Management Strategies
5. Visualization Techniques in Plans and TIP Development

Referring to consistency with planned growth and development plans, Ms. Meek said there is an emphasis now on linking land use and transportation. Staff utilized growth forecasts to establish the projected need of transportation projects. The mapping that showed the proposed transportation projects also showed the established countywide growth areas in relation to them.

Mr. Lee said that at the PSATS meeting, Secretary Biehler placed a strong emphasis on coordinating land use and transportation planning. He asked if there were ways to judge how effective we are when considering consistency with planned growth and development areas. Mr. Meek said that it has been agreed that the project criteria for Centre County community planning goals and objectives needs to be strengthened. Mr. Lee asked if there were other ways, besides projects, where land use and transportation planning can be done. He suggested a policy level forum, not just for projects but for issues such as comprehensive planning, daycare/transit stops and workforce housing.

Mr. Zilla said that a lot of the things that members have been seeing and continue to see are perfect examples of that. Mr. Kausch will give a status report on the Coordinating Plan tonight, which deals with moving people. He said that there have been a lot of actions taken through this LRTP process and there are many public transportation projects included that reflect very closely CATA's Strategic Plan. In addition, there are not a lot of large capacity adding projects in the LRTP because there were several comments about the community impacts of those.

Mr. Lee added that it is not all about moving people and not all about mobility. It is about people accessing what they are after. When creating workforce housing, you are not moving people but putting residences as close to work as possible so there is more access. There is federal money for projects like daycare centers at transit stops. Mr. Smoker thought that there may be more money available for these types of programs from the Federal Transit Administration.

Ms. Meek said that the operational and management strategies need to be reviewed to ensure that we are looking at the existing system and how it is managed rather than just adding capacity. Examples of these strategies would include traffic signal coordination, traveler information services and incident management. Staff looked at the project ranking criteria and pulled out those types of projects.

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Ms. Meek said that in March, the MPO looked at project lists. She noted that nine new bridge projects were added to the bridge list, which came from the PennDOT District 2-0 office. These were reviewed by the municipalities in which they were located and ranked by the Project Ranking Committee. The Transportation Enhancements (TE) list was also included. Staff evaluated 19 new pedestrian/bicycle projects, all provided by the Centre Region Bike Coalition as part of the formal adoption of the original LRTP. Five of these were added to the updated LRTP and eight projects that were on the current Plan fell beyond fiscal constraint. Ms. Meeks said that staff is not optimistic about a funding round with this TIP cycle.

Mr. Lee asked how it was that three projects that are on the 2007-2010 TIP are not ranked (Centre Hall Streetscape, Boalsburg Streetscape, West Beaver Avenue). Ms. Meek said that those were added in the last round of funding competition. At that time, they were the only three candidate projects in the last round and there were not adequate resources to fund them. Staff left those in because they were projects that were in the running. Mr. Lee asked how they relate to numbers 3, 5, 6, 11 and 12. Ms. Meek said that they are projects that could move forward. They were not ranked as part of the group that did the project ranking. Mr. Zilla said that the Coordinating Committee did authorize not ranking the projects that were already on the TIP because they represented priorities that were already established.

Ms. Meek reported that Appendix K was updated to reflect the current MPO membership. Regarding visualization techniques, staff sat in on a web conference concerning this last week. Staff feels that they are already doing this and will continue to do so in the future. There are also other components that were not included with the agenda, but will part of the final updated LRTP. These include projects outside of fiscal constraint, a new section about environmental justice, the Public Participation Plan and comments, and any information from the 30-day public comment period. Those will be included in the final copy that is sent to members in June.

Ms. Goreham asked how the interested parties database was created for the Public Participation Plan. Ms. Meek said that the language in SAFETEA-LU specifically identified groups that staff had not looked at before. That, along with the environmental justice list, was used.

Ms. Meek reviewed the schedule, saying that the Public Participation Plan is out now for a 45-day public comment period. A public meeting will be held next Monday. If the Coordinating Committee authorizes the LRTP update for public comment, that 30-day period will occur between April 30 and June 4. On May 23, staff will go to Harrisburg to meet with the resource agencies and on May 31, the LRTP public meeting will occur. The Technical Committee will meet on June 13 and review the public input and the Coordinating Committee will review this information on June 26. With this schedule, the July 1 deadline for completing the update can be met.

The Technical Committee recommendation was that the Coordinating Committee authorize staff to advertise the draft LRTP 2007 Update for the required 30-day public comment period.

Mr. Pytel made a motion recommending that the Draft LRTP 2007 Update be advertised for the required 30-day public comment period. Mr. Lee seconded, asking that staff consider the question of access as well as mobility. The motion passed unanimously.

5. Coordinated Public Transit-Human Services Transportation Plan

Mr. Kausch provided an overview of the Coordinated Plan. This process is a requirement for public transportation providers such as CATA and the Centre County Office of Transportation (CCOT) to apply for funding under three federal programs: JARC, New Freedom and Section 5310. Preparation of this plan is

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an approved project in the 2006-2007 Work Program and supplemental planning funds are available for this effort.

The Coordinated Plan features four basic elements. First, an inventory of all the public, private and human service transportation providers available in Centre County will be prepared. Next, gaps will be identified, especially as they pertain to the target populations of each of the funding programs. Using a collaborative process with stakeholder involvement, as well as the general public, the Plan needs to identify candidate projects that might be used to close those gaps. The list of strategies will then be prioritized. Mr. Kausch said that the deadline for this Plan is May 31.

An approved timeline was shown and Mr. Kausch said that this schedule was being adhered to. He reviewed some of the tasks that have occurred and noted that the public comment period began on April 20. Next week will be the first of three stakeholder meetings.

Mr. Lee asked what the source of funding was for the grant award. Mr. Kausch said that would be the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). These would flow through PennDOT to projects that have been identified as needed improvements and ranked in each individual MPO or RPO area by the local stakeholder committee. PennDOT makes the final decisions.

Mr. Kausch said that staff has done a basic demographic analysis of the County, particularly relative to the target populations. These include such items as population density, age distribution, poverty and income. The next step is to inventory all public, private and human service transportation providers. He noted examples and said that staff will learn more about the human service agencies through the stakeholder meetings. A list of candidate projects from existing planning documents is being developed, using the LRTP, the TIP and agency strategic plans. Mr. Kausch reviewed some of these projects and which funding programs they fell under.

There were about 50 prospective members for the stakeholder committee. Staff hopes to achieve about a 50 percent participation rate. There are three meetings scheduled. The prospective member list draws from the Centre County Office of Transportation local advisory committee, environmental justice mailing list and the LRTP interested parties list. Committee membership represents geographic diversity from the Centre Region, Bellefonte, Moshannon Valley and other outlying portions of the county. Staff wanted to try to bring together a broad base of knowledge, so several types of groups are represented. Mr. Kausch said that locations for the meetings were chosen in different areas of the County and evening sessions were scheduled to allow professionals to attend. He said that responses to solicitation letters were requested by April 20. Follow-up contact will be established to encourage participation.

The draft Plan consists of the foundation information up to this point. Mr. Kausch said that this is not all the Plan will include. He thought it would become much more interesting after results of the stakeholder meetings were included. Copies of the Plan thus far are available for each member.

6. Air Quality Conformity – State Implementation Plan (SIP)

Mr. Zilla recalled that Centre County has been in non-attainment for ozone since 2004 under the new eight-hour standards. Therefore, the MPO is subject to conformity requirements for plans and programs. MPOs are responsible for making conformity determinations and the Commonwealth, through DEP and PennDOT, is responsible for developing procedures for determining conformity. Mr. Zilla said that the conformity procedures are documented in the State Implementation Plan (SIP) and must demonstrate that Pennsylvania has the authority to compel compliance. A Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) is used as the mechanism to compel and enforce compliance.

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Explaining why the MPO is required to have an MOA at this point, Mr. Zilla said that the SIP is being revised to meet the latest federal requirements and these revisions must be done by August, 2007. A new MOA is required for SIP revisions. Since Centre County is now subject to air quality conformity procedures, it must now become part of this new SIP. In addition, the execution of the MOA requires an authorizing resolution.

Mr. Zilla reviewed key elements of the SIP revisions. He said that the CCMPO is designated as a Scenario 1 entity, which means that PennDOT prepares the technical elements of the conformity analysis on behalf of the CCMPO. Something that has become a major part of the revisions is interagency consultation. There are federal and state environmental resource review agencies and there must be a consultation process between these and the MPO to make sure that everyone is in agreement about the data and assumptions that are used in the air conformity analysis.

Mr. Lee asked for examples of environmental resource agencies. Mr. Zilla said that the federal Environmental Protection Agency and the State Department of Environmental Protection are the two key agencies, but there may be others involved in the process. Mr. Smoker added that the FTA and FHWA are part of that as well.

Mr. Zilla said that the MPO is required to consult with the resource agencies about air quality issues related to the UPWP, TIP and LRTP, including travel demand modeling. This consultation needs to occur for projects affecting air quality.

Mr. Spychalski made a motion to adopt a resolution authorizing the Coordinating Committee Chair and Vice-Chair to execute legal agreements on behalf of the CCMPO. Ms. Goreham seconded.

Mr. Pytel suggested using the titles Chair and Vice-Chair rather than using actual names in the resolution. Mr. Buckalew suggested changing the date to today. Mr. Zilla said that he would make both of those changes.

Mr. Lee said that he was concerned that this resolution seemed to be unlimited. He thought there should be language that says "contracts and agreements with Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and United States Governments and approved by the MPO Coordinating Committee." Otherwise it seems that an agreement can be signed any time, whether or not the MPO has agreed. Mr. Klees asked if this was a typical form that is used and Mr. Zilla said that it was. Mr. Lee asked if that means that agreements could be signed without MPO approval. Mr. Zilla said that this is an authorizing resolution. Typically, executing an agreement is a specific action that staff presents to the policy body.

Mr. Pytel said that he has not seen any report about the air quality in Centre County and asked if it was getting better or worse. Mr. Zilla said that it is getting better. When the MPO went through the TIP update the last time, there were additional years of air quality recordings. Those showed that the Centre County is now back within standards, but there is now a 20 year maintenance period.

The above motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Spychalski made a motion to approve the execution of an MOA for the revised Conformity SIP. Mr. Pytel seconded the motion and the motion passed unanimously.

7. 2009-2012 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Mr. Zilla reviewed the schedule of milestones for the 2009-2012 TIP. In May, staff anticipates receiving the final guidance document for this TIP update. This will include the procedural, financial and Transportation Enhancement (TE) guidance.

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The State Transportation Commission public hearing will be held in August, although the exact dates have not been released. Once staff knows those, information will be sent to all the municipalities and participating entities on the MPO to let them know about the opportunity to provide testimony. Typically MPO staff will help schedule time slots for testimony.

Between September and November staff will be working with PennDOT to review fiscal constraints and cost estimates for projects that are on the current TIP that need to move forward. Mr. Zilla said that the MPO was fortunate to get several new projects on the current TIP, but those projects will be coming up for construction during this TIP update. He did not think there would be room in the next TIP to add new projects unless the state Legislature came up with a process to provide more state funding.

Mr. Zilla said one of the key issues will be funding for the two interchanges that connect I-99 and I-80 in Spring and Marion Townships. The local access interchange has to be constructed first, so it is imperative that money for that project be included in this TIP update. This will clearly be a spike project since the price is approximately \$40 million. Mr. Zilla noted that a lot of the projects for the mainline of I-99 will be complete and off the TIP, which should leave funding available.

Mr. Lee said that the September-November time period calls for discussing the process for update of the TIP with the MPO committees and review potential projects. He asked if "projects" meant highway, bridge and transit. Mr. Zilla said that was correct. Mr. Lee asked about workforce housing and so on, saying that he wanted to expand the scope. Mr. Zilla said that the TIP should come from the LRTP. If there are new projects to be added, they will come from that Plan. There are potential sources for alternative types of projects, but clearly some of that will be in competition with other projects. He said that if funds like CMAQ could be used for a strategy like that, policy makers will have to decide whether to put money toward that or another project that is moving through the pipeline or on the LRTP that is also available for those funds. Mr. Lee said that he wanted to make sure that transportation demand management is part of the picture and not just highways, bridges and transit.

Mr. Zilla said that in January, 2008, the MPO will be asked to approve the submission of Preliminary Draft TIP to PennDOT. This MPO is unique in that this is done by formal action. Staff is hoping to receive PennDOT's comments by the end of February and in March the MPO can approve the Final Draft TIP for public comment and air quality conformity analysis. It is anticipated that the TIP will be adopted in June and by August, the State Transportation Commission will adopt the State TIP and Twelve Year Program. Mr. Zilla said that since 1997, the TIP and the first four years of the Twelve Year Program have been identical. He said that FTA and FHWA will approve the state TIP by the end of September so that it can take effect on October 1, 2008.

Mr. Pytel asked about the status of the acid rock removal. Mr. Kline referred to the immovable permit, saying that PennDOT is about 75 percent done with putting a cover over the buttress. They have not started on the smaller cut-face side. As far as the movable permit, PennDOT is approximately 80 percent complete with the excavation. They anticipate moving material in June or July.

Mr. Pytel said there was an article in the newspaper about the opening of I-99. Mr. Kline said that PennDOT is looking at what can be done about opening sections. Right now, the connection between Port Matilda and Tyrone is not finished. They are looking at later fall for completing that.

Mr. Klees referred to the discussion about alternatives to roads being on the TIP. He said that one of his goals is to have bylaws in place and address how ideas move through a process so that everyone understands that. He said that he was not sure how that was going to go as the TIP is being developed. He encouraged

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municipalities and members to bring ideas forward early in the process. In the absence of a planning process, he thought people should work with the planning staff from the Centre Region or the County.

Mr. Lee asked when in the process the staff approaches municipalities and asks for input. Mr. Zilla said that should happen in May when information is sent out about the State Transportation Commission. The purpose of these hearings is for people to provide the MPO with input about issues. He noted that the MPO should be looking to the LRTP as the driver of the TIP. Mr. Klees said that since the LRTP does not get a major update for three years, this TIP is based on the current LRTP.

Mr. Lee asked who was going to present at the STC in August. Mr. Zilla said that typically both planning Directors provide a 10-15 minute overview of issues in the County. The STC does not really want to hear from the MPO because they view this process as one where people are coming in and providing input to the MPO members. Usually the Chair and Vice-Chair are invited to sit with the STC to receive input.

Mr. Pytel asked about the streetscape projects. Ms. Meek said that staff has not received word about whether or not there would be a future TE funding round. Mr. Roberts said that he did not expect that. Ms. Meek said that typically it is every two years and in sync with the TIP rounds. However, a couple of years ago there was a funding issue where the MPO had to be fiscally constrained. This MPO moved their projects, but many other MPOs and RPOs did not and are still carrying projects into future years. Mr. Zilla said that if there is not going to be another application cycle, we still need to know if there will be enhancements money provided to the CCMPO. Right now there are three projects showing up that were discussed before and do not have funding. Ms. Meek has consulted with PennDOT about a process that could be used if we are receiving funding.

Ms. Meek said that there is a federal State Routes to School Program now. However, the state has not decided how to divide up that money yet. Mr. Smoker added that at this point a new round of TE projects is not anticipated, although a final decision has not been made.

Mr. Klees said that one of the things discussed previously was an MPO response to the State Transportation Report and/or the Governor's proposal for funding. He asked if the MPO would like to consider that and what form that might take. The last time the MPO directed staff to write a response was on the Acid Rock Drainage issue, then the MPO split their vote and nothing was done.

Mr. Klees said that he talked to representatives at the PSATS Conference and got a sense of where they thought things were heading. The issue about the Turnpike is one of the more controversial subjects in Harrisburg right now. That is also a key component in the Governor's proposal. He said that there seems to be a real aversion to tax increases.

Mr. Klees said that if any members had strong feelings about any of the components in the Governor's proposal they should be directed to staff. That could be the core of response letter. It was decided that staff would send out an email asking for input, with a deadline date.

Mr. Jon Eich encouraged the MPO to include global options instead of worrying about the small pieces. Transportation is one of many issues on the plate and the MPO might want to tell the Governor that they hoped he would deal with that this year because the funding needs are critical.

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8. Announcements

Mr. Klees reviewed the upcoming meetings. He noted that starting in May, members should expect to provide brief municipal or planning region reports at the beginning of the agenda to update the MPO on transportation issues in each area.

9. Adjourn

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lori Shingler
Recording Secretary