

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

**Tuesday, June 22, 2010
6:00 p.m.
Ferguson Township Municipal Building**

Minutes

Voting Members Present:

Dan Klees	College Township
Ron Buckalew	Centre Regional Planning Commission (CRPC)
Barbara Spencer	Halfmoon Township
Paul Rittenhouse	Harris Township
Jeff Luck	Patton Township
Theresa Lafer	State College Borough
Jon Eich	Centre County Board of Commissioners
Bob Jacobs	Centre County Board of Commissioners
Rich Watters	Lower Bald Eagle Valley Planning Region
Jadine Reese	Upper Bald Eagle Valley Planning Region
Mike Savage	Moshannon Valley Planning Region
Michele Barbin for Ken Hall	Mountaintop Planning Region
Bob Corman	Penns Valley Planning Region
Joe Davidson for John Spychalski	Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA)
Kevin Kline	PennDOT District 2-0
Frank Hampton for Larry Shifflet	PennDOT Central Office

Non-Voting Members Present:

Rob Cooper	Pennsylvania State University
------------	-------------------------------

Others Present:

Jim May	Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA)
Tom Zilla	CRPA
Trish Meek	CRPA
Greg Kausch	CRPA
Lyssa Cromell	CRPA
Mike Bloom	Centre County Planning/Community Development Office (CCPCDO)
Doug Erickson	Patton Township Manager
Ken Roan	Marion Township
Ray Gutshall	Marion Township
Mike Rose	Office of State Representative Kerry A. Benninghoff
Nick Malawskey	Centre Daily Times

1. Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance

Mr. Klees called the meeting to order at 6:04 p.m. and led the Committee in the Pledge of Allegiance.

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Mr. Corman and seconded by Mr. Buckalew to approve the minutes of the May 25, 2010 CCMPO Coordinating Committee meeting as presented. The vote in favor was unanimous.

3. Citizen Comments

There were no citizen comments.

4. Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2040

Ms. Meek reviewed the Final Draft project lists for the Centre County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) 2040. She reported that on June 9, 2010, the Technical Committee recommended that the Coordinating Committee approve the Final Draft project lists for an Air Quality Conformity Analysis and 30-day public comment period. She noted that MPO staff would be presenting the plan at the Agency Coordination Meeting (ACM) in Harrisburg on June 23, 2010 for federal and state environmental resource review. The public comment period is tentatively scheduled to begin in July. The final draft LRTP 2040 will be presented for adoption at the September 22, 2010 Coordinating Committee meeting.

Motion was made by Mr. Corman and seconded by Ms. Lafer to approve the LRTP Final Draft project lists for an Air Quality Conformity Analysis and public comment. The motion carried unanimously.

5. 2011-2014 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

a. Air Quality Conformity Analysis and Resolution

Mr. Zilla explained that because Centre County has been designated as a “maintenance” area for ozone, the preparation of an air quality conformity analysis is required for the CCMPO’s Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The conformity analysis ensures that transportation projects, programs, and plans do not make existing conditions worse or cause new violations of the federal Clean Air Act standards.

The Air Quality Conformity Analysis Report for the Final Draft 2011-2014 TIP shows that the forecasted emissions are lower than the amounts budgeted for Centre County, the conformity requirements for ozone are satisfied, and the current LRTP and new 2011-2014 TIP will not adversely affect air quality. No public comments were received.

At its June 9, 2010 meeting, the Technical Committee recommended that the Coordinating Committee approve the 2010 Centre County Air Quality Conformity Analysis Report and adopt the 2010 Air Quality Conformity Resolution.

Mr. Luck asked if there were any advantages to being designated an ozone maintenance area, to which Mr. Zilla responded that it does allow for the use of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality Improvement Program (CMAQ) funds.

Motion was made by Mr. Eich and seconded by Mr. Savage to approve the 2010 Centre County Air Quality Conformity Analysis Report and adopt the Air Quality Conformity Resolution. The motion carried unanimously.

b. Final Draft TIP

Mr. Zilla reviewed the funding allocations on the Final Draft 2011-2014 TIP. The base highway/bridge allocation on the 2011-2014 TIP is \$18 million less than on the current TIP. The new TIP does include \$1.2 million in federal earmarks for two roadway projects and \$5.1 million in spike funding for five bridge projects.

Mr. Zilla then reviewed the project priorities for the 2011-2014 TIP. The focus of the 2011-2014 TIP is on Structurally Deficient (SD) bridges. There are 21 bridge and box culvert projects on the Final Draft TIP. There are also line items for SD Bridges, Bridge Maintenance and Preservation, and Local Bridge Retroactive Reimbursement.

Full funding is included for the Route 350 Sandy Ridge S-curve, Route 550 Bishop Street Betterment, Route 150 Congested Corridors Program improvements, SR 3014 North Atherton Street Signal Improvements, SR 3018 Whitehall Road/University Drive Extension, and the Old Fort Park and Ride Lot.

Three projects are only partially funded on the 2011-2014 TIP and will need additional funding in the next TIP cycle. More funding is needed for the Route 322 corridor safety improvements (total shortfall of \$2.1 million; federal earmarked funding will be sought), Route 26 (Jacksonville Road) Betterment, and Route 26 Pine Grove Mountain Lower Escape Ramp.

Mr. Kausch reviewed the project priorities for transit. The main focus is on operating assistance, followed by fixed route vehicle rebuilds and replacements, CATA's advanced technology initiative, new and replacement vanpool vans, paratransit vans for the CCOT, and the expansion of CATA's operations and maintenance facility. Mr. Kausch noted that the Transit Element required a few minor revisions because the funding sources for some projects had changed. The total amount, however, remains the same.

Mr. Zilla reported on the comments received during the 30-day public comment period, which concluded at 5:00 p.m. on June 15, 2010. There were two comments on the 2011-2014 TIP. One was from a Philipsburg area resident regarding commuter bus service between Philipsburg and State College, and the other was from a Rush Township resident regarding the status of the Route 350 S-curve project and the location of the truck pull-off at the top of Sandy Ridge.

At its June 9, 2010 meeting, the Technical Committee recommended that the Coordinating Committee adopt the new 2011-2014 Centre County TIP, with minor revisions to the funding sources listed in the Transit Element. The TIP must be submitted to PennDOT by July 15, 2010. The State Transportation Commission will then consider its approval in August, followed by the FHWA and FTA in September. It is anticipated that the 2011-2014 TIP will take effect on October 1, 2010.

Motion was made by Mr. Buckalew and seconded by Mr. Corman to adopt the 2011-2014 Centre County TIP with the revisions to the Transit Element noted above.

Mr. Eich asked for clarification on the average fleet age of the Centre County Office of Transportation Services (CCOT) vehicles, to which Mr. Kausch responded that the average fleet age is four years.

The motion carried unanimously.

c. Procedures for TIP Modifications

Mr. Zilla reviewed that the *Procedures for TIP Modifications* must be updated with each new TIP based on the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between PennDOT, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The procedures define “amendments,” which require formal action, and “administrative actions,” which do not.

There were no comments received during the 30-day public comment period, and at its June 9, 2010 meeting, the Technical Committee recommended that the Coordinating Committee adopt the new *Procedures for TIP Modifications*.

Motion was made by Mr. Eich and seconded by Mr. Luck to approve the adoption of the new Procedures for TIP Modifications. The motion carried unanimously.

6. Federal Transportation Planning Process Certification

Mr. Zilla stated that with each TIP update, the CCMPO is required to certify that its planning process is in compliance with all applicable Federal regulations.

On June 9, 2010, the Technical Committee recommended approval of the resolution and supporting documentation certifying the CCMPO's compliance.

Motion was made by Ms. Spencer and seconded by Mr. Rittenhouse to approve the resolution certifying the CCMPO's compliance with all applicable federal transportation planning regulations. The motion carried unanimously.

7. State Transportation Funding in Pennsylvania

Mr. Zilla provided background information on PA Act 44, which was meant to provide additional state transportation funding through increased tolls on the Pennsylvania Turnpike and the tolling of I-80. The decision by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to not allow I-80 tolling has reduced Act 44 revenue by 50%, resulting in a \$470 million reduction in transportation funding in the 2010-2011 state fiscal year. The state legislature is holding a special session to address transportation funding, and CCMPO Chair Dan Klees provided testimony at the June 1, 2010 public hearing. At the public hearing, members of the PA House of Representatives indicated that local officials should provide input on the alternative funding sources they would support. Correspondence was provided to the state legislators representing Centre County in May. Similar correspondence is being prepared for the federal legislators.

Mr. Zilla explained that historically, transportation funding has come from federal and state motor fuel taxes. The federal gas tax (last increased in 1993) goes into the Highway Trust Fund, while the state gas tax (last increased in 1997) goes into the Motor License Fund. The state gas tax is made up of two components, a flat tax and an oil company franchise tax.

In response to a question from Mr. Luck, Mr. Zilla stated that the oil company franchise tax is capped.

Mr. Zilla added that because federal transportation funding is under continuing resolution until December 2010, future funding levels are unknown.

The Committee discussed taking a policy position regarding state revenue sources for transportation.

Mr. Luck advocated an increase in the vehicle registration fee, accompanied by a user fee based on vehicle miles traveled (VMT). The VMT could either be captured through the use of a transponder or at the annual state vehicle inspection.

In response to a question from Ms. Reese, Mr. Luck explained that a fee based on VMT would differ from a gas tax because as vehicles become more fuel efficient, revenues from VMT fees would remain constant while revenues from gas taxes would drop off.

Mr. Savage noted that VMT fees would have a negative impact on people who drive long distances to get to work. He proposed that vehicle registration fees could be based on the value of the vehicle, with higher value vehicles being assessed higher fees.

Mr. Corman concurred that fees based on VMT would be unfair to rural populations who have to drive long distances to work, shopping, and other services.

Ms. Spencer noted that PA vehicle registration fees are minimal and agreed that vehicle registration fees could be based on the value and/or type of vehicle.

Mr. Rittenhouse stated that in his opinion, registration fees based on the value and/or type of vehicle would be discriminatory, and he proposed that a percentage of the state sales tax be set aside to fund infrastructure improvements.

Mr. Klees suggested that an additional sales tax dedicated to funding transportation projects could be added to transportation related purchases and services.

Mr. Luck stated that at the very least, the motor fuel tax should be adjusted to catch up with inflation.

Ms. Lafer suggested the need to encourage a tax on the Marcellus Shale natural gas industry and other businesses that use the roads extensively.

Mr. Eich added that the oil and gas industries should not be exempted from paying their general tax burden.

Mr. Eich also noted that a large proportion of the overall transportation budget is being used for transit and that some are advocating its removal.

Several Committee members brought up the need to educate their constituencies about the implications of the state funding shortfall, in particular that basic safety projects are being delayed 10-20 years due to the lack of funding.

In terms of addressing project costs and streamlining project development, Mr. Kline noted that prevailing wage has been addressed over the years.

Ms. Reese pointed out, however, that most rural roads are not built to specifications because it simply costs too much.

Mr. Luck indicated that he would not support tolling because it requires new infrastructure and has the unintended consequences of driving traffic onto secondary roads.

Ms. Spencer supported removing the Pennsylvania State Police budget from the Motor License Fund but said it should be addressed as a separate issue.

Ms. Reese suggested that municipalities could return the State Police rebate so that it could be used to fund transportation projects.

Mr. Eich concurred with Ms. Reese's idea of using the State Police rebate and suggested that municipalities of a certain size should be required to reimburse the state for police services.

Several Committee members pointed out, however, that their municipalities could be faced with huge bills for State Police services if the legislature were to consider this option.

Mr. Eich acknowledged the value of indexing the motor fuel tax but expressed concern about how raising the ceiling on the oil company franchise tax might impact gas prices.

At the close of discussion, the Committee took the following actions:

Motion was made by Mr. Luck and seconded by Mr. Savage to support adjusting the motor fuel tax to compensate for the rate of inflation over the past 10 years and then indexing it for future inflation, and to increase vehicle registration fees to make up for any remaining Act 44 shortfall. The motion carried 14-0-2, with Mr. Kline and Mr. Hampton abstaining.

Motion was made by Ms. Reese and seconded by Mr. Eich to support incrementally moving the PA State Police budget out of the Motor License Fund. The motion was defeated 6-8-2, with Mr. Kline and Mr. Hampton abstaining. Mr. Savage and Mr. Watters asked to go on the record as being opposed to this option.

Motion was made by Mr. Klees and seconded by Mr. Luck to support actions to ensure that no current or future state transportation funding be used to mitigate damage caused by Marcellus Shale drilling activities, and that other taxes or fees be generated to offset the costs of repairing damage to roadways caused by the natural gas drilling industry. The motion carried 14-0-2, with Mr. Kline and Mr. Hampton abstaining.

It was the consensus of the Committee to support increasing the county and municipal share of Motor License Fund revenue to the 20% that was originally intended, and to support action to increase the level of funding committed to the Pennsylvania Infrastructure Bank.

Motion was made by Mr. Savage and seconded by Mr. Rittenhouse to not support a VMT tax. The motion carried 13-1-2, with Mr. Kline and Mr. Hampton abstaining. Mr. Luck voted against the motion and stated for the record that he would support a VMT tax.

The Committee agreed that tolling should continue to be considered as an option, but did not take a formal position.

8. Transportation Enhancements (TE) Program

Ms. Meek reported that as part of the guidance for the development of the 2011-2014 TIP, the PennDOT Central Office indicated there would be no formal funding round for Transportation Enhancements (TE) projects in 2010. However, because all previously-approved TE projects in Centre County are advancing to construction, the CCMPO must allocate TE line item funds in years 2012, 2013, and 2014. The 2011 allocation was dedicated to the remainder of the Centre Hall Streetscape project by action of the CCMPO in November 2009.

Ms. Meek reviewed the tentative schedule for the 2010 TE application cycle. A draft application and evaluation criteria will be developed in consultation with the existing TE Review Committee. The application period is expected to run from October through December 2010, with project selection in March 2011.

Ms. Meek pointed out there is no guarantee that TE funding will be included in the federal reauthorization bill, but that other funding sources, such as Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds, could be used to complete these projects if the program is discontinued.

In response to a question from Mr. Watters regarding the project evaluation criteria, Ms. Meek stated that in the past the criteria included such things as program eligibility, past funding history, and how quickly the project could be moved forward. The TE Review Committee will actually score and rank the projects.

Mr. Zilla encouraged anyone considering the submission of a TE application to contact Ms. Meek as soon as possible to get the process started.

9. Project Update

Mr. Kline expressed appreciation to CCMPO staff for working with the North Central Rural Planning Organization (RPO) and SEDA-COG RPO to prepare the joint presentation regarding PennDOT District 2-0 asset management needs for the legislative finance hearings. This presentation is available on the MPO website.

Mr. Kline then provided a brief report on the status of highway and bridge projects in Centre County.

- The Centre Hall Streetscape project is underway and should be completed this fall.
- The box culvert project over Mackey Run in Linden Hall has been bid. Completion is expected this fall.
- A bridge project on Route 3027 in Rush Township is underway.
- A four bridge preservation project in the area of Route 26 and Route 322 has now been completed.
- A paving project on Route 144 was bid on June 10, 2010.
- A six bridge preservation project on Route 322 was bid on June 10, 2010.
- A box culvert project on SR 2012 in Gregg Township was bid on June 15, 2010.
- The Miles Township T-523 bridge project has been delayed because the consultant has gone into bankruptcy. PennDOT is working to obtain the plans so that the project can move forward.
- The Route 26 Betterment project near the Bellefonte interchange will be bid during the week of June 21, 2010. This project will include bridge work over the interstate, concrete patching, paving, signing, and delineation.
- The Old Gatesburg Road extension will be bid no later than September 30, 2010.
- The North Atherton Street Signal Coordination project was bid in May 2010.
- The Route 26 Pine Grove Mountain upper escape ramp and truck pull off was bid on May 27, 2010.
- The Route 350 S-curve project is scheduled for November 2011, but the PennDOT Central Office is trying to advance this project on the 2009-2010 TIP.
- The Boalsburg Streetscape project is scheduled for an August 2010 bid.
- The Old Fort Park and Ride has significant Section 4(f) environmental clearance issues and may not be able to advance. A meeting will be held to discuss options.

CCMPO Coordinating Committee Meeting Minutes

Tuesday, June 22, 2010

Page 8

- An alternatives review is underway for the Lynn Street Wall project in Bellefonte. There is currently no construction funding for making repairs.
- Route 322 Safety Improvements are in the Preliminary Engineering Phase. The projection is for a fall 2013 bid. Construction money is needed on the next TIP to move this project forward.
- The Route 550 Betterment is in the Final Design and Right of Way Phases. It is expected to go to bid in spring 2011.
- There will be a public display for the Whitehall Road Project on Thursday, June 24, 2010. The Final Design Phase is wrapping up. The project is now in the Right of Way Phase and is expected to go to bid in late spring/early summer 2011.
- The Slab Cabin Run project on Branch Road is in final design and is expected to go to bid in spring 2012.
- The Port Matilda Bald Eagle Creek bridge project on Route 3017 is ready for bid; construction will take place in 2011.

Ms. Spencer noted that the fiber optic crews working throughout the county have been very constituent friendly and asked if there have been any issues. Mr. Kline responded that there has been very little disruption; the fiber optic crews have been trying to stay out of the paved areas as much as possible and their traffic control set ups have been done very well. The fiber optic work will be completed in August.

In response to a question from Mr. Klees, Mr. Kline reported that resurfacing and bridge repairs are being done on the route over old Skytop using American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

Mr. Eich asked about the report of a slide issue on I-99, to which Mr. Kline responded that PennDOT is working with its contractors on some cracking in the concrete, but there is no slide issue.

10. Announcements

The next Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, September 8, 2010 at a location to be determined.

The next Coordinating Committee meeting will be held at 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, September 28, 2010 at a location to be determined. Agenda items will include: the LRTP 2040, TE Program, Transportation funding issues in Pennsylvania, and the formation of membership subcommittee to address Marion Township's request for MPO membership.

11. Adjournment

Ms. Spencer moved to adjourn. There being no further business, the June 22, 2010 CCMPO Coordinating Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:21 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Lyssa Cromell
Recording Secretary