

MINUTES
HEPMPO TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
November 27, 2006

CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS

The HEPMPO Technical Advisory Committee met on Monday, November 27, 2006 at 1:00 p.m. in the Washington County Administrative Annex, 80 West Baltimore Street, Hagerstown, Conference Room #1. The following members were present: Bob Gordon, MPO Director; Jim Bender, Assistant City Engineer, City of Hagerstown; Mike Thompson, Director, Washington County Planning Department; Jill Baker, Washington County Planning Department/HEPMPO; Donald Bailey, West Virginia Dept. of Highways Planning and Research; Carolyn Motz, Manager, Hagerstown Regional Airport; Lynn Walker, Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority; Kevin Cerrone, Washington County Dept. of Transportation; Jeff Blanton, West Virginia Federal Highway Administration; Mike Nixon, Maryland Dept. of Transportation; Terry McGee, Chief Engineer, Washington County Engineering Department; Roger Goodwin, County Engineer, Jefferson County Department of Planning, Zoning and Engineering; Derek Meyers, Town of Boonsboro; William Teach, County Engineer, Berkeley County; Michael Covell, City Engineer, City of Martinsburg; and Debra Eckard, Washington County Planning Department.

MINUTES

Mr. McGee made a motion to approve the minutes of the September 13, 2006 HEPMPO Technical Advisory Committee meeting as presented. Seconded by Ms. Motz. Unanimously approved.

TIP AMENDMENTS

- West Virginia

Mr. Bailey presented for review and recommendation the following TIP Amendments for the West Virginia Department of Transportation.

- Martinsburg John Street – Enhancement Project – Construct sidewalks from Water Street to East John Street Bridge - \$150,000 Federal funds and \$37,500 Sponsor funds for a total project cost of \$187,500
- Ceramic Drive – Install a traffic signal - \$225,000 Federal funds (100%)
- Charles Town Revitalization – Enhancement Project – Construct pedestrian amenities from Samuel Street to U.S. 340 Bypass – \$400,000 Federal funds and \$100,000 sponsor funds for a total project cost of \$500,000
- Shepherdstown Streetscape, Phase II – Construction of sidewalks, resetting curbs and the installation of street lights and pedestrian amenities along King Street - \$250,000 Federal Funds and \$62,500 sponsor funds for a total project cost of \$312,500
- Shepherdstown Battlefield – Enhancement Project - Acquire property of the Faraway Farm - \$100,000 Federal funds and \$25,000 sponsor funds for a total project cost of \$125,000

Mr. Gordon stated that Pan Tran has received a Section 15 grant in the amount of \$64,970.00 that should also be included in the TIP Amendment. Ms. Walker stated that the funds would be used to coordinate transportation for Berkeley and Jefferson Counties and to hire a mobility manager to help with this coordination project. This is a one-year, non-renewable grant.

Discussion: Mr. Covell made an inquiry regarding the Raleigh Street project and when the money would need to be brought into the TIP. Following a brief discussion, Mr. Bailey was asked to further investigate this inquiry.

Mr. Nixon made a motion to recommend approval of the TIP Amendments to the MPO Interstate Council. Seconded by Mr. Cavell. Unanimously approved.

PARTICIPATION PLAN FOR TRANSPORTATION PLANNING

Mr. Gordon presented for review and comments the Participation Plan for Transportation Planning. This plan has been drafted using the newly adopted transportation legislation. The plan is also being reviewed by the Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Authority. Comments have been received from the West Virginia Federal Highway Administration and have been incorporated into the Plan.

Discussion: There was a brief discussion regarding agencies that are not typical transportation partners that could be significantly impacted by a major transportation plan or project and their review and input into the Participation Plan. Mr. McGee suggested notifying various agencies and corporations that the Plan is available upon their request.

Comments: On page 3 of the Plan, "Availability of Information" section, Mr. McGee recommended charging a research fee for requested information, which is allowed under the State of Maryland's Freedom of Information Act. On page 4 of the Plan, "Specific Participation Strategies" section, Mr. McGee made an inquiry regarding the list of those interested or affected by the plans and programs of the MPO that should be notified. There was a brief discussion that the language in this section may be too broad and should be modified.

PROJECT UPDATE – COORDINATED TRANSIT PLAN

Mr. Gordon presented an update on the Coordinated Transit Plan for Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties in West Virginia. He stated that the MPO has entered into a contract with RLS & Associates to prepare a specialized human services transportation plan for Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan counties in West Virginia. Region 9 will be funding the Morgan County portion of the plan. The Plan should be finalized by the end of January 2007. The contract is approximately \$25,000.

REVISION TO FY 2007 UPWP

Mr. Gordon began a discussion regarding the revisions to the FY 2007 UPWP. The MPO previously decided to hire a transportation planner/staff to help the MPO with their transportation planning needs. Advertisements for the position were posted in local newspapers and on NARC and AMPO websites. Five applications were received; however, only one applicant had any relative transportation planning experience. This individual received poor references from previous employers and therefore, the position was not filled. Mr. Gordon stated that there are transportation data needs in West Virginia such as GIS analysis information and a gap analysis is needed for the existing Long Range Transportation Plan because it is required to be compliant with SAFETEA-LU by June 30, 2007. Mr. Gordon recommended using the salaries that have been set aside for two transportation planners and solicit an RFP process to hire a consultant to prepare the data collection that is needed for the gap analysis. The Long Range Transportation Plan will need to be implemented and the MPO is not in a position to provide the information necessary for a model calibration and the travel demand model.

Mr. Gordon stated there is approximately \$100,000 in the current work program and an excess fund that could be used to pay a consultant. Mr. McGee expressed his opinion that the funds may not be enough to cover the cost of a good consultant. He also believes that a consultant may set up the GIS data the way they feel would be best but is not necessarily best for the MPO.

Other members of the Committee made suggestions for consultants to contact. A suggestion was made to contact the GIS Department of local colleges for students that may be interested in the collection of data. Mr. Gordon stated that he would also contact Mr. Gudmundson with the Washington County GIS Department to solicit help with the collection of data.

OTHER BUSINESS

Mr. Gordon reminded the Committee that any project that could have transportation and/or air quality implications must be reviewed by the MPO. An Air Quality subcommittee of the Technical Advisory Committee is being formed to review all air quality issues for conformity. Projects should be brought before the Committee as soon as possible so there is no interruption in moving the project forward.

FUTURE MEETINGS

The next scheduled meeting for the TAC will be held on January 17, 2007. Time and location to be determined.

ADJOURNMENT

The meeting was adjourned at 2:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Gordon
HEPMPO Director

RSG/dse