

**MINUTES**  
**HEPMPO TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE**  
**September 13, 2006**

**CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

The HEPMPO Technical Advisory Committee met on Wednesday, September 13, 2006 at 10:00 a.m. in the Washington County Administrative Annex, 80 West Baltimore Street, Hagerstown, Conference Room #1. The following members were present: Bob Gordon, MPO Director; Brian Hug, Maryland Dept. of the Environment; Mike Martin, City of Ranson Engineering/Inspections Dept.; Jim Bender, Assistant Engineer, City of Hagerstown; Mike Ball, Air Quality Manager, Region 9; Mike Thompson, Director, Washington County Planning Department; Kathleen Maher, City of Hagerstown 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; Gary Rohrer, Director, Washington County Public Works Dept.; 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, Washington County Engineering Department; and Debra Eckard, Washington County Planning Department.

**OPENING COMMENTS**

Mr. Gordon began the meeting by discussing the responsibilities of the Technical Advisory Committee in relationship to the impact of air quality issues in relation to different projects, the need to more closely evaluate projects that will be included in the Transportation Improvement Program and the Long Range Transportation Plan and the need to prioritize projects. There also needs to be a broader dissemination from the MPO to the local governments and the general public as well as collecting information from the local governments that will help in the local transportation process.

One main objective of the MPO is the collection and dissemination of data. The State of West Virginia owns and operates approximately 97% of all the West Virginia highways. There is no local city or county road network; therefore, collecting data for roadways is the responsibility of the State. In the State of Maryland, Washington County and the City of Hagerstown collect data regularly and makes this data available to the MPO.

The Technical Advisory Committee would also be responsible to initiate projects and address concerns regarding particular projects. The MPO will work as a liaison between the local governments, the State and Federal governments regarding major transportation issues. The role of the MPO is becoming more important with growth and development in the region. Air quality issues, greater transportation issues, and ozone issues demand a greater transportation planning process to be in place. Also, new transportation legislation that has passed, SAFETEA-LU, has mandated a greater involvement of all agencies.

Mr. Gordon distributed the draft "Participation Plan for Transportation Planning". A 45-day public review and comment process has begun in order to adopt this plan.

There was a brief discussion regarding prioritizing transportation plans and air quality conformity issues. Plans will be reviewed with each governmental group to discuss the greatest needs.

**DISCUSSION OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT PROJECTS**

Mr. Gordon began a brief discussion regarding projects that would be considered major projects not necessarily involving Federal funds. Projects would include regionally significant projects and projects involving air quality issues. The MPO is responsible for addressing human services transportation issues. A draft contract has been sent to RLS & Associates to coordinate a para-transit service plan for Berkeley, Jefferson and Morgan Counties.

## **TRANSIT STUDY FOR WASHINGTON COUNTY COMMUTER**

There was a brief discussion regarding a proposed transfer facility in downtown Hagerstown. Public transportation will become a major issue in the transportation process especially as growth and development occurs. The MARC train services in West Virginia will be influenced by several major developments occurring along the new Route 9 corridor.

## **COORDINATED HUMAN SERVICES TRANSIT PLAN IN WEST VIRGINIA**

Two urban counties will be involved in this plan, Berkeley and Jefferson Counties. Region 9 will contribute monies for the Morgan County portion of the study.

## **TIP AMENDMENTS**

Mr. Gordon stated that TIP projects are generally developed by the State DOT's and included in the Region's TIP in cooperation with the MPO.

Mr. Nixon provided the following list of projects for the FY 2007-2009 Maryland Transportation Improvement Program.

### **Maryland**

- US Route 40 at Edgewood Drive – Widen intersection - The State of Maryland will pay 50% of the project and the City of Hagerstown and Washington County will split the remaining 50% of funding.
- I-81 Study from the West Virginia to the Pennsylvania line – Study to examine widening and interchange improvements
- Congestion Management for multiple projects – provide traffic control, monitoring, and management of state facilities
- Urban Street Reconstruction and Revitalization – provides roadway rehabilitation and streetscape improvements on state roads in towns
- Bridge Replacement & Rehabilitation – Provide major upgrade and maintenance of structures on State highways
- Resurface & Rehabilitation – provides periodic resurfacing and upgrade of auxillary features on State roads
- Safety & Spot Improvements – provides localized improvements to address safety issues on State roads
- Environmental Projects – provides aesthetic improvements along state roads
- I-70 – replace concrete ditch lining with vegetation to reduce thermal impact
- Antietam Battlefield – acquire 8 properties (828 acres) scenic easements
- Western Maryland Rail Trail, Phase IV – construct bike/ped trail
- Small Urban Transit System, Washington County Commuter – capital assistance for vehicles and equipment
- Small Urban Transit System, Operating, Washington County Commuter – operating funds for County commuter

Mr. Bailey presented the following amendment for the West Virginia 2006-2008 Transportation Improvement Program.

- Washington Heritage Trail Interpretive Signs/Living History – develop and install interpretive signage and create a living history program
- Woodbury Avenue Signal – install traffic signal
- WV 9 – Kearneysville Turn Lane – construct left turn lanes
- WV 45 Signal, Martinsburg – renovate signals
- WV 51, Inwood Right Turn Lanes – construct right turn lanes, WV 51
- WV 51, Inwood Traffic Signal – install traffic signal

- Washington Heritage Trail Seed Funds – administrative funds

Ms. Lynn Walker, Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority presented a request for the reallocation of funds through the State and is required to be added to the TIP.

Mr. Gordon stated that approximately 5 meetings will be held each year, one per quarter with a second meeting being held during the last quarter of the year. Mr. Gordon stated that a Federal review was completed in January of 2006 and mandates specific guidelines that the MPO must conform with. Several deficiencies were found which the MPO is addressing in a timely manner.

Mr. Jeff Blanton, Federal Highway Administration representative from West Virginia, stated that the Federal review strongly recommended re-establishment of the Technical Advisory Committee due to the numerous changes in growth and development. The MPO needs to take a stronger role in helping the Counties and municipalities deal with these changes.

Mr. Gary Rohrer, Washington County Department of Public Works, recommended that a list of the TAC members should be available on the website. He also recommended that a distribution list including e-mail addresses and phone numbers should be provided to each member of the TAC to facilitate communication and a better working relationship.

Mr. Gordon adjourned the meeting at 11:20 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Robert S. Gordon  
HEPMPO Director