

**HAGERSTOWN/EASTERN PANHANDLE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
March 17, 2021**

The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee held a meeting on Wednesday, March 17, 2021 at 10:30 a.m. via tele-conference call. MD and WV Open Governmental Meetings Acts and HEPMPO Bylaws permit virtual only meetings of our committees and boards provided members can hear and be heard by each other and by any media or members of the public.

The following were in attendance: Matt Mullenax, HEPMPO Executive Director; Ian Beam, MDOT; Sean Varsolona, MDOT SHA; Jennie Brockman, Jefferson County Planning & Zoning; Amanda Sink, Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority; Chris Kinsey and Brian Carr, WV DOH; Dana Keith, City of Martinsburg; Jaime McKay, MDOT MTA; Ken Clohan, WV DOH District 5; Kenana Korkucovic, Franklin County Planning; Darryl Hennessey, City of Charles Town; Laura Hoffmaster, Berkeley County Planning; Kevin Donohue, HEPMPO Transportation Planner; and Jill Baker and Debra Eckard, Washington County Planning Department / MPO. Also in attendance were: Michael Winger, MTA; Kandese Holford, MDOT SHA; Karlie Shannon, MDOT MTA; and Jon Mayer.

CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Mullenax called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

MINUTES

Motion and Vote: Ms. Brockman made a motion to approve the minutes of the January 20, 2021 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Varsolona and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

-TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY-2021-2024 West Virginia Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Donahue reviewed the proposed amendments and administrative adjustments as follows:

Eastern Panhandle Transit Authority

Amendment

- Medium Duty Commuter Bus: Two medium duty commuter buses for future service to the Silver line in Virginia; Transit – FY2021 \$185,048 (\$148,038 Federal; \$37,010 Local); Transit – FY2022 \$214,953 (\$171,962 Federal; \$42,991 Local)

Motion and Vote: Ms. Brockman made a motion to recommend approval of the proposed amendment as presented to the Interstate Council. The motion was seconded by Mr. Hennessey and unanimously approved.

Adjustments – No formal action required

- Operating assistance – Section 5307: Funding for staff and typical office functions; Adjust FY2021 to \$1,386,202 (\$693,101 Federal; \$693,101 Local) and FY2022 to \$1,525,704 (\$762,852 Federal; \$762,852 Local)
- Capital Assistance - Preventative Maintenance: Preventative maintenance for fleet vehicles; Adjust FY2021 to \$394,375 (\$315,500 Federal; \$78,875 Local)

- Capital Assistance – Miscellaneous Equipment: Purchase of miscellaneous equipment for vehicle fleet; Add funding for FY2022 in the amount of \$97,205 (\$47,764 Federal; \$19,441 Local)
- Capital Assistance – Section 5339: Bus Purchase program; Correct prior amounts to \$157,702 (\$126,162 Federal; \$31,540 Local) and FY 2021 to \$485,261 (\$388,209 Federal; \$97,052 Local)

West Virginia Department of Highways

Adjustment – No formal action required

- US 340 Rock Slide Investigation: Investigation and repair of land slide; Move ROW from FY 2021 to FY 2022 and adjust contribution to \$40,000 (Federal)

FY-2021-2024 Maryland Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Donahue reviewed the proposed administrative adjustment as follows:

Washington County Department of Engineering

Adjustments – No Formal Action Required

- Professional Boulevard Extended Phase 2: Construct new connector road; Move CON from FY 2020 to FY 2021 to updated total of \$3,895,000 (\$1,000,000 Federal; \$2,895,000 Local)

MDOT/MTA TRANSIT SAFETY PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Mr. Michael Winger, Deputy Chief Safety Officer – Safety Management System of the Maryland Transit Administration gave a brief presentation. He noted that MDOT MTA is required to include safety performance targets in its Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP). There are four categories in which safety performance measures must be established:

- Fatalities (total number of reportable fatalities and rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)
- Injuries (total number of reportable injuries and rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)
- Safety Events (total number of reportable events and rate per total vehicle revenue miles by mode)
- System Reliability (mean distance between major mechanical failures by mode)”

Mr. Winger noted that the focus in our area is commuter bus service. A target has been set with the commuter bus offices of 25,000 vehicle revenue miles between failures on commuter bus routes. He briefly described the methodology that is used for establishing new safety performance measures and challenges that are faced when reporting and collecting data.

-LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

MDOT SHA CONTEXT DRIVEN ACCESS AND MOBILITY FOR ALL USERS

Ms. Kandese Holford, Assistant Chief and Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Coordinator with the Regional and Intermodal Planning Division for MDOT SHA was present and gave a brief presentation. She noted

that the Context Driven Access and Mobility Guide was released in 2019. This Guide established 6 contexts in the State of Maryland which include: Urban Core, Urban Center, Traditional Town Center, Suburban Activity Center, Suburban and Rural. These contexts help explain the relationship between how much you can access and how far you can go. Ms. Holford discussed proactive treatments that have been established and are being used around the State of Maryland. She briefly explained the process for developing the Public Safety Action Plan (PSAP), the goals that have been identified, and the next steps in the process, which will include public outreach and participation. The Plan should be finalized early in 2022.

Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Mullenax reported that the MPO is in the process of updating its LRTP with a target completion date of July 1, 2022. The updated Plan, called Direction 2050, is scheduled for review and consideration in May 2022. A successful kick-off meeting was held with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) in late January. Staff and the consultant are currently finalizing the Plan's goals and objectives, as well as developing a public project website. Staff is anticipating another meeting with the TAC in late April/early May to review the Existing Conditions Report, as well as conduct our first public meeting and on-line surveys.

Martinsburg Pike Corridor Vision Plan

Mr. Mullenax explained that this is a corridor study on the Martinsburg Pike between University Drive and Alt 45 west of Shepherdstown. Included in the agenda packet is a linear map showing an analysis of injury crash locations along the corridor. A kick-off meeting was held with the Advisory Committee in February and a workshop will be held soon. We anticipate a public meeting on the draft plan and materials sometime in June.

WV 51 West Washington Street Feasibility Study

Mr. Mullenax stated that the MPO is partnering with WVDOT and the City of Charles Town on a feasibility study examining traffic safety and pedestrian mobility improvements along the WV 51 corridor. A map of the study corridor was included in the agenda packet. A stakeholder meeting as well as two field review meetings have been held. Staff is anticipating a public meeting to be held in April. The study should be completed in May.

WV 9 Planning and Environmental Linkage Study

Mr. Mullenax announced that a public workshop was held early in March to present six draft alternative corridors for a new WV 9 alignment between Martinsburg and Berkeley Springs. The public comment period is open until April 5th. The agenda packet contains screenshots from the online MetroQuest survey which includes links. Mr. Mullenax briefly reviewed the on-line survey. The next public meeting will be held virtually on May 11th. Completion of the study is expected by the end of June.

-ORGANIZATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Draft FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Ms. Baker presented the Draft FY 2022 UPWP. There are no significant changes from the previous year. The amounts shown are based upon several factors including estimated work hours, anticipated special studies, overhead, etc. Labor and consulting costs make up a large portion of the budget. There has been a slight increase in funding from WV and a slight decrease in funding from MD; however, there is not a significant difference in the overall budget.

Mr. Mullenax noted that funding for consulting services will include finalizing the LRTP, updating the 2019 Title VI Plan, and two special studies that include examining the feasibility of a mid-block crossing on Dual Highway in Hagerstown and identifying a TSMO strategy for I-81 in West Virginia.

The UPWP will be advertised to the public for review and copies will be located in the local libraries. We will adopt the FY 2022 UPWP at the May meeting.

Financial Status Update

Ms. Baker gave a brief overview of the second and third quarter expenditures. Expenditures are lower this year than previous years due to the pandemic. There will be more expenditures in the third quarter for consulting services for the various projects we are currently working on and advertising due to upcoming public meetings.

Mr. Mullenax noted that the projects being performed by our on-call consultant were delayed because the contract was signed later than usual.

Urban Areas for 2020 Census Proposed Criteria

Mr. Mullenax reported that the U.S. Census Bureau published a Federal Register notice that provides proposed criteria changes for defining urban areas based on the results of the 2020 Decennial Census. The Census Bureau is requesting comment on the proposed criteria by May 20th. The major change will be the urban area qualification. The US Census Bureau is proposing to change the minimum threshold of 2,500 persons by census block to a minimum threshold of 10,000 persons or 4,000 housing units. This change may impact future funding because it is directly tied to our urbanized population numbers. A copy of the FHWA's proposed timeline for release of the new urbanized areas, TMA designations, etc. was included in the agenda packet. Staff will continue to monitor this situation and provide updates as they become available. Mr. Mullenax believes that a Congestion Mitigation Process (CMP) will be included in the FY 2023 UPWP in case we become a TMA and need to produce one quickly.

Mr. Mullenax noted that the WV Association of MPOs, as well as the National AMPO are drafting letters to comment on the proposed changes. Mr. Beam stated that MDOT will also be providing comments.

Director's Report

Mr. Mullenax gave a brief update on the following:

- Staff is providing assistance to the Washington County Engineering Department and the Greater Hagerstown Committee in preparing an I-81 FY2021 INFRA grant application for the I-81 widening project and Halfway Boulevard extension. Submittals are due on Friday.
- Maryland is in the process of updating its State Freight Plan. The State Freight Advisory Committee has been expanded to include one member from each MPO in Maryland. Mr. Mullenax is now serving on that Committee.
- Maryland is in the process of updating its Maryland State Transit Plan. Washington County lead all counties, including Baltimore and Baltimore County, in response rates to the survey released by the State of Maryland.
- Plans are being made for the WVDOT Planning Conference in the Spring of 2022. The Conference was canceled last year due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The planning committee will be meeting later this week.
- Mr. Donohue has been working on story maps for several corridor studies we have in progress. He has also been working with EPTA on their Wayfinding and GTS projects. EPTA's new website will be launched on April 1st.

-OTHER BUSINESS

Public Comment

There were no citizens present.

Future Meetings

The next scheduled meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee is Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 10:30 a.m.

-ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Brockman made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:45 a.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Varsolona and so ordered by Mr. Mullenax.

Respectfully submitted,



Matthew Mullenax, Executive Director