

# PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

## Commissioners:

R. Jack McKernan, Chairman  
Tony R. Mussare, Vice Chairman  
Richard Mirabito, Secretary

## Location:

Executive Plaza  
330 Pine Street  
Williamsport Pennsylvania 17701



“Building Partnerships”

Kurt Hausammann, Jr., AICP, Director

Voice: (570) 320-2130  
Fax: (570) 320-2135  
www.lyco.org

Mailing Address:  
48 West Third Street  
Williamsport Pennsylvania 17701

## WILLIAMSPORT AREA TRANSPORTATION STUDY COORDINATING COMMITTEE PUBLIC MEETING MINUTES

*February 25, 2019 Coordinating Committee Public Meeting: Williamsport Regional Airport, 700 Airport Road, Montoursville, PA 17754*

### CALL TO ORDER

Chairman Tosca called the meeting to order at 1:00 PM.

### MINUTES

Approve December 17, 2018 Coordinating Committee Public Meeting minutes with minor corrections made to the Call to Order and Adjournment sections of the report.

*Mr. Mullins motioned for approval of the meeting minutes with the corrections made as discussed, which was seconded by Mr. Hart and unanimously approved.*

### PUBLIC COMMENT

Mr. Lavelle thanked PennDOT District 3-0 staff for their efforts in responding to a request made by the County's Department of Public Safety to clear debris out from under a state-owned bridge which carries Lycoming Creek Road (SR 1017) over Lycoming Creek in Hepburn Township. The debris was interfering with the readings produced by an automated stream gauge which is attached to the bridge. The District's maintenance force was quick to respond and communicated well with County staff. This automated stream gauge is vital for County and municipal emergency management officials as well as residents within the floodplain of the Lower Lycoming Creek watershed.

### ACTION ITEMS

### TIP ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIONS/AMENDMENTS

Mr. King referred to the fiscal constraint chart spreadsheet showing 21 administrative actions that have been made to the FFY 2019 WATS TIP since the last MPO meeting. As none of these actions constitute a formal amendment, this handout was presented for informational purposes only and no action was taken by the Coordinating Committee.

## **ADOPTION OF THE REGIONAL OPERATIONS PLAN, (ROP) FOR THE CENTRAL PA REGION**

Mr. Lavelle presented this item by referring to the final draft ROP document prepared by a consultant team utilized by PennDOT which includes PennDOT Engineering Districts 2-0, 3-0 and 9-0, including Lycoming County. This region is centered around the Regional Traffic Management Center housed at the District 2-0 Office in Clearfield, PA. Mr. Lavelle explained the main purposes of the ROP are to address federal requirements related to Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) planning, incorporate statewide TSMO goals for operations planning at the regional level, utilize objectives-driven, performance-based planning processes for operations and congestion management planning, integrate ITS operations into overall transportation planning processes, identify and prioritize TSMO capital projects on the TIP and manage funds for TSMO operations and maintenance in future years.

Mr. Murawski added an earlier version of the ROP was done in 2008, but that ROP was done for each Engineering District and was more limited in its scope and effectiveness. This ROP is better suited for a larger geographic area that is more effective for ITS deployment purposes.

Mr. Lavelle highlighted the major proposed projects in the ROP and indicated their consistency with the newly adopted WATS Long Range Transportation Plan Update. ROP corridors of significance in Lycoming County include I-180, US 220 and US 15 which are also included on the National Highway System. Specifically, queue detection needs were identified in the ROP for the I-180 westbound approaching the US 15 southbound off ramp at the Market Street Bridge. Also dynamic curve warning needs were identified along US 15 southbound prior to the I-180 interchange at the Market Street Bridge. Traffic signal enhancement needs were listed for the I-180 interchanges at Market Street and Maynard Street, including queue preemption and timing improvements.

Citing the consistency with the MPOs ROP and staff review, Mr. Lavelle recommended that the board consider adoption of the Central Region ROP.

***Mr. Cronin motioned for the WATS Coordinating Committee to adopt the Regional Operations Plan (ROP), For the Central PA Region, which was seconded by Mr. Mullins and unanimously approved.***

## **DISCUSSION ITEMS**

### **2019 PROJECT CONTRACT LETTING UPDATE**

Mr. King provided a handout listing the 2019 proposed construction contract lettings for transportation projects in Lycoming County. A total of 18 projects were shown at an estimated cost of approximately \$47 million. Highway related work such as resurfacing, reconstruction and safety improvements involve 13 projects along with 3 bridge improvement projects and 2 TAP funded projects.

## **US 220 CORRIDOR SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS UPDATE**

Mr. King noted the construction contract lettings on this US 220 project between PA 287 and West Fourth Street interchange will occur this year and will take about 3 years to complete. Work will include access management changes along with improvement of existing aging infrastructure. Mr. King explained that US 220 is a principal arterial highway with a primary function of providing a high speed through route between Interstates 80 & 180. Mr. King went on to explain that the most effective way to improve safety on this corridor is to minimize or eliminate conflicting traffic movements through an number of strategies such as: eliminating left turns from side roads, prohibiting crossing movements from side roads, reducing the number of median openings, providing safe locations for turning movements, and the removal or reduction of redundant access points. The goal of this project is to reduce conflicts, eliminate confusion of drivers in the median, and increase the overall safety of the corridor.

Ms. Tosca explained that it was PennDOT District 3-0s intention to maintain two lanes of traffic in both directions as much as possible throughout the project. This decision was based on the volume of traffic that this corridor sees on a daily basis and a desire to lessen the impact to those drivers who utilized this corridor often. In doing so, the project phasing had to be extended into 3 construction seasons.

## **2019 MULTIMODAL FUNDING UPDATE**

Mr. King detailed a list of multimodal transportation projects that are PennDOT administered and locally sponsored. These projects are at various points of development. Of the ten on the list, one thus far, have a fairly certain let date – Pathway to Health. The Miller’s Run Greenway is anticipated to also be let this year. The remaining projects will be delivered between the end of 2020 and 2022.

There is one current application in for this year’s multimodal round. This application was submitted by UPMC and involved streetscape and improvements to the UPMC campus. Funding for this project did not appear to be awarded based on the most recent press release prior to today’s meeting.

## **Obligation Report**

Mr. Williams presented this item by noting that FHWA identified as a STIP planning finding the need for planning partners to prepare a report listing the projects where federal fund obligations were made during the last federal fiscal year. Such reporting will need to be done in future years as well. Mr. Williams summarized the WATS report for FFY 2018 showing 30 projects with a total obligated amount exceeding \$24 million. About half of the funds were obligated toward NHPP and HSIP projects with an emphasis on highway resurfacing. Over \$22 million of obligated funds were directed to construction phase activity demonstrating WATS places a strong emphasis on project delivery. Federal funds were geographically spread fairly evenly across the more populated areas of the county. The report separately lists each obligated project in terms of improvement type, phase, funding source, obligation date and amount. The report also lists federal transit grants obligated by River Valley Transit and STEP, Inc.

## **PENNDOT CONNECTS UPDATE**

Mr. Lavelle briefed the Committee on an upcoming PennDOT Connects meeting for municipal partners, which will be hosted by MPO staff on March 13<sup>th</sup>. He stated that the location of the meeting will be at the Trade and Transit II building in the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor Michael Ross Center conference room. Currently only four municipal officials have RSVP'd to attend this training. If more interest isn't realized by March 8<sup>th</sup> then the meeting will most likely be canceled. If the Connects meeting does end up being canceled, then Mr. Lavelle stated that the MPO will offer to meet one-on-one with those that have expressed interest. Mr. Lavelle added that this meeting may have a more successful outcome if it was held closer to the start of our next TIP update cycle.

Scott Williams mentioned that SEDA COG will be hosting a Connects session for municipal officials in the near future and that, perhaps, we might be able to steer interested officials to that meeting if ours gets canceled.

## **STAFFING UPDATE**

Mr. Lavelle informed the Coordinating Committee of recent staffing changes at the County Planning Department which include the retirement of Kurt Hausammann Jr. as full time Planning Director in May with conversion to part-time status still as Planning Director for at least one year. Fran McJunkin will assume the role of sole Deputy Planning Director since the second Deputy Director position was eliminated by the Commissioners with the recent resignation of Kim Wheeler. On January 15<sup>th</sup>, Mr. Murawski started work as Assistant Transportation Planner on a part-time basis since his retirement in December. Lastly, Lynn Cunningham (our Assistant Transportation Planner) has announced his intentions to retire on May 3<sup>rd</sup> after 42 years of fine County service. There are plans to fill the position but HPMS traffic counting will no longer be part of the job duties.

## **LYCOMING COUNTY BRIDGE BUNDLING PROGRAM**

Mr. Lavelle updated the Committee by stating that the County has received the PennDOT approval of its PIB loan application, which was submitted in May, and has started a discussion with the County's fiscal staff to begin the processing of the agreement. He explained that the County is working with PennDOT Central Office to amend the agreement so that the County is able to take partial distribution of the funds rather than the entire loan at once in order to save money on interest. Since the bridge bundling program will have two primary phases an initial withdrawal will occur around late summer of 2019 for engineering work, and a larger withdrawal will happen in approximately three years when the County is entering the construction phase of the project.

He then explained that aside from processing the loan agreement the County will begin to initiate the execution of cost sharing agreements with municipal bridge owners to secure their 5% local

share, and issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select an engineering consultant to design the local bridge repair/replacement projects.

## **TAC Transportation Funding Risks Presentation**

Mr. Murawski, member of the PA Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC), provided a presentation on the recent TAC study identifying potential future risks to PA transportation revenue sources and the possible impacts associated with those risks.

The 5 major risks are:

- Federal Transportation Funding Reduction
  - If federal appropriations are reduced in Federal Fiscal Year 2021 due to the insolvency of the Highway Trust Fund then Pennsylvania's highway and public transportation funding through FY 2029-30 could be reduced by a cumulative \$6 billion.
- Vehicle Sales Tax Provision Repeal
  - If Act 89 is amended to repeal the vehicle sales tax transfer that begins in FY 2022-23, when Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission (PTC) payments are reduced then public transportation funding through FY 2029-30 could be reduced by a cumulative \$3.6 billion.
- Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission Pending Litigation
  - If litigation by national motor carrier organizations against the PTC continues to prevent payments by the PTC to the Public Transportation Trust and Multimodal Transportation Fund, then transportation funding through FY 2029-30 could be reduced by a cumulative \$2.2 billion.
- PA State Police Transfer Statutory Revision
  - If the PA Fiscal Code were amended to halt the anticipated stepdown of the Motor License Fund transfer to the PA State Police, then transportation funding through FY 2029-30 could be reduced by a cumulative \$1.8 billion.
- Reduced Motor License Fund Tax Receipts
  - If tax receipts to the Motor License Fund are reduced due to declining motor fuels sales and vehicle licenses and fees, then transportation funding could be lowered. The scenario analyzed put this reduction at a cumulative \$4.9 billion through FY 2029-30.

\$18.5 Billion Risk by Fund:

- Federal Funding at Risk: \$6 billion. \$6 billion could reconstruct half of PA's interstates.

- PA Public Transportation Trust Fund and Multimodal Transportation Fund Revenue at risk: \$5.8 billion. \$5.8 billion is equivalent to about five years of public transportation state-of-good-repair funding.
- PA Motor License Fund Revenue at Risk: \$6.7 billion. \$6.7 billion could reconstruct half of PA's interstate bridges.

A full report can be found on the State Transportation Advisory Committee [website](#).

Mr. Murawski stated there are three main things for the MPO members to consider:

- What is happening with the Truckers lawsuit?
- When the budget goes to get adopted in the summer, what is being done with the fiscal code on the state police? How are the costs going to be distributed more fairly across the Commonwealth and the municipalities that don't pay for state police service?
- What is going on with Senator Ward's committee and what is the committee recommending as remedies?

#### **OTHER BUSINESS / PUBLIC COMMENT**

There was no further business or public comment. Following the meeting Mr. Hart gave a tour of the new airport terminal building to those in attendance. Chairman Tosca thanked Mr. Hart for allowing us to utilize his conference room for today's meeting and noted the next Coordinating Committee public meeting will be held on May 20, 2019 in the 1<sup>st</sup> floor, Commissioner's Boardroom at Executive Plaza in Williamsport.

#### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned by Chairman Tosca at 2:24 PM.

Respectfully Submitted,



John Lavelle, AICP, CFM  
WATS Secretary