

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION
BUSINESS MEETING
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
DECEMBER 15, 2021



Please note that these minutes are not intended to capture every individual comment, but rather to identify critical discussion points and highlights of the STC business meetings.

CALL TO ORDER:

Chair Yassmin Gramian, P.E., convened the quarterly business meeting of the State Transportation Commission (STC) at 10:04 a.m. on December 15, 2021.

ROLL CALL:

Commissioners Present on the Phone:

1. Honorable Yassmin Gramian, Chair
2. Honorable Chad Amond
3. Honorable Michael Carroll
 Ms. Meredith Biggica, Alternate Present
4. Honorable Ronald J. Drnevich
5. Honorable Frank E. Paczewski
6. Honorable James D. Kingsborough
7. Honorable Paige Willan
8. Honorable Tim Hennessey
9. Honorable John Sabatina
 Mr. Jesse Monoski, Alternate Present
10. Honorable Wayne Langerholc, Jr.
 Mr. Nolan Ritchie, Alternate Present

Commissioners Not Present

None

MINUTES:

ON A MOTION by Ms. Page Willan and seconded by Mr. Jimmy Kingsborough, and unanimously approved, the September 15, 2021, STC business meeting minutes were accepted.

CHAIR’S REMARKS:

Secretary Gramian welcomed Commissioners and guests to the STC meeting. Secretary Gramian highlighted the Department’s funding opportunities.

Secretary Gramian discussed the PennDOT Pathways - Public Private Partnership (P3) Major Bridge Program. She noted that the Planning and Environmental Linkage document has been reviewed and concurrence has been granted by the Federal Highway administration.

Secretary Gramian gave updates about the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA). She said that the IIJA, which was signed into law by President Biden on November 15, 2021, is the largest long-term investment in infrastructure and the economy in the Nation’s history.

Secretary Gramian noted that the legislation provides \$550 billion of new Federal investment in infrastructure, including roads, bridges, public transit, rail freight, water systems, resiliency, clean energy technologies, broadband networks, ports, and airports. She explained that Pennsylvania will be able to complete the following infrastructure improvements with federal funding:

- Repair and rebuild our highway and bridge infrastructure with a focus on climate change mitigation, resiliency, equity, and safety for all users, including cyclists and pedestrians. Pennsylvania expects to receive \$11.3 billion for federal-aid highway apportioned programs and an additional \$1.6 billion for bridge replacement and repairs.
- Improve healthy and sustainable transportation options. Pennsylvania is expected to receive \$2.8 billion over five years to improve public transportation options across the commonwealth.
- Build a network of electronic vehicle (EV) charging stations to facilitate long-distance travel and provide convenient charging options. Pennsylvania is expected to receive \$171 million over five years to support the expansion of an EV charging network across the commonwealth.

2021 12-YEAR TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM: By Larry Shifflet

Deputy Secretary Larry Shifflet presented the 2021 12-Year Transportation Program (TYP) adjustments stating that between August 28, 2021, and November 19, 2021, there were 1,091 program adjustments including:

- 398 Project/Phase Additions
- 574 Project/Phase Changes
- 119 Project/Phase Deletions

Mr. Shifflet said that the overall changes represent a \$120,037,629 increase for the reporting period.

Mr. Shifflet highlighted five projects in Scranton/Wilkes Barre area. He specifically discussed the addition of \$8,910,000 for the bridge replacement project on State Route 2035 (Bear Creek

Road) over Interstate 81 in Pittston Township, Luzerne County. The Pennsylvania Turnpike is contributing \$8,100,000 of the funds for the project along with a state match of \$810,000.

ON A MOTION by Mr. Ronald Drnevich and seconded by Mr. Tim Hennessey, and unanimously approved, the 2021 12-Year Program Adjustments were approved.

2021 RAIL FREIGHT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RFAP) AND RAIL TRANSPORTATION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (RTAP): By Jennie Louwerse

Deputy Secretary for Multimodal, Ms. Jennie Louwerse, AICP, presented the 2021 RFAP and RTAP projects. Ms. Louwerse presented 25 projects totaling \$33,250,234 for approval.

ON A MOTION by Mr. James Kingsborough and seconded by Ms. Page Willan, the 2021 Rail Freight Assistance and the Rail Transportation Assistance Programs were unanimously approved.

WORKING SESSION:

TAC AD HOC TRANSPORTATION IMPACT FEE COMMITTEE WHITE PAPER: By Brian Funkhouser

Mr. Mark Murawski, TAC Vice-Chair and Chair of the Ad Hoc Committee, explained that the purpose of the study is to identify structural challenges in administering land use and transportation in Pennsylvania and in paying for transportation improvements. He noted that the emphasis is on provisions of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code (MPC) which addresses Transportation Impact Fees (sections 501-A through 506-A of the MPC) and how impact fees intersect with improvements required by the Highway Occupancy Permit (HOP) process, as well as how this interacts with long-term transportation planning goals.

Mr. Funkhouser explained that there are independent land use decision factors including:

- Municipality: Decisions made by elected officials according to limits of MPC.
- Developers/Landowners: Decisions influenced by economic market factors.
- PennDOT: Decisions guided by traffic and safety statutes and regulations.

Mr. Funkhouser discussed the following issues and identified solutions:

Land Use and Transportation

Lack of coordinated input from transportation planning partners

- *Modify the MPC to require planning partner input during local review.*

Many municipalities control land use in Pennsylvania

- *Encourage MPO/RPO review in multi-municipal transportation partnerships.*

Private sector timeframes not in sync with public sector planning

- *Continue and build upon local government coordination.*

Inability to effectively mitigate traffic volume and congestion

- *Encourage municipalities to require Traffic Impact Studies.*

Transportation Impact Fees

Viewed as costly and time consuming to enact and effectively administer

- *Consider MPC amendments to Transportation Impact Fee language.*

Complex upfront planning studies with several restrictive requirements

- *Expand funding for preparation of Transportation Impact Fee studies.*

Impact fees take time to accumulate to a sufficient level and limited time to expend

- *Encourage preparation of Multi-Municipal Transportation Capital Improvements Plans.*

HOP Process

Process is reactive and improvements viewed with a narrow focus

- *Involve partners in the HOP process.*

HOP addresses impacts on state roads and does not address impacts on local roads

- *Amend the MPC to permit municipalities to address offsite impacts on local roads.*

Decisions sometimes made independent of impact fee planning/implementation

- *Involve the PennDOT District staff in impact fee studies/capital improvements planning.*

Transportation planning partners not involved in HOP Process

- *Consider revisions to the HOP process to include a corridor approach.*

ON A MOTION by Ms. Page Willan and seconded by Mr. Ronald Drnevich, and unanimously approved, The TAC Ad Hoc Transportation Impact Fee Committee White Paper was approved.

12-YEAR PROGRAM UPDATE STATUS REPORT: By Daniel Keane

Mr. Daniel Keane from the Center for Program Development and Management gave a status report for the 2023 12-Year Program (TYP) update. Mr. Keane explained that the 2023 draft 12-Year Program document is being developed and the team is preparing to again support the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) public comment periods for the 23 MPOs and RPOs, and one independent County. Mr. Keane added that, for the first time, the team will also conduct a 15-day public comment period for the draft Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) to educate and inform the public on how they can get involved and provide feedback on the draft 2023 STIP.

Mr. Keane highlighted the most recent outreach efforts for the 2023 12-Year Program, and the upcoming efforts for the TIP and STIP.

2023 12-Year Program

Mr. Keane explained that the release of the Transportation Performance Report (TPR) in February 2021, served as a soft-launch for the 12-Year Program update outreach campaign. The official kick-off of the public outreach period followed which included a Transportation Survey and an Online Public Forum. The feedback collected during the TYP Public Comment Period was shared directly with the regional planning partners for the update of their TIPs.

Mr. Keane noted that the 2023 TYP document will focus on the future of transportation in Pennsylvania. He said that the 2023 12-Year Program will reflect on Pennsylvania's

transportation accomplishments, which includes embracing new technology. The 12-Year Program will also discuss Real ID, active transportation, micro-mobility, and electric vehicles.

Mr. Keane also noted that the 12-Year Program will explore all sources of transportation funding, including federal, state, and local. He added that the digital and PDF versions of the 2023 12-Year Program are expected to be ready for STC review and adoption in August 2022. The digital version will be available on TalkPATransportation.com as well as the PDF version for printing; hard copies will also be provided to the commission members and PennDOT Executive Staff.

Mr. Keane said that for the first time, the feedback received from the Spring 2021 Public Outreach Campaign for the 2023 12-Year Program Update was incorporated the update of the statewide Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Freight Movement Plan (FMP). The 12-Year Program, LRTP, and FMP were also jointly publicized over the same time frame and the spring social media campaign informed the public about how the feedback would be implemented into plans and program. The regional TIPs were also linked from TalkPATransportation.com, creating a central location where all regional TIPs can be easily accessed and viewed by the public.

Mr. Keane said that in accordance with the Statewide Public Participation Plan (PPP), PennDOT will also be hosting the first public comment period for the STIP from June 1 through June 15, 2022, on the TalkPATransportation.com website.

2023 Transportation Improvement Programs

Mr. Keane noted that as TIPs become available for public review and comment on planning partners websites, the links to each of these draft documents will be connected to an interactive map on the STC website. The interactive map highlights the MPO/RPO area when the public comment period is open, and by clicking on the map, the public will be directed to the MPO/RPO website, where the required TIP public comment documents are listed for the user to review and provide comments.

Mr. Keane said that the draft TIPs will be available for review and comment between April through June 2022. Each TIP will have a 30-day Public Comment Period. The final TIPs will also be made available for public access once they've been finalized. The TIP page of the TalkPATransportation.com website will be updated frequently throughout the Public Comment Period to reflect the status of the various regions' Public Comment Periods.

2023 Statewide Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Keane said that a static STIP Process Infographic is being developed to serve as a visual educational tool for the public. He explained that the first step in the STIP Outreach process is to notify the public, including the 15 federally recognized Tribal parties, of the opportunity for public comment. The Public Comment Period will be advertised to the public via a press release, the PA Bulletin, stakeholder emails, social media, and the STC website.

Mr. Keane also noted that at the end of the 15-day STIP Public Comment Period, PennDOT will review, address, and document comments received. PennDOT will then submit the draft 12-Year Program, which includes the STIP to the STC for adoption in August 2022. The adopted 2023 12-Year Program and the federal approved STIP will be posted on the STC website.

Mr. Ritchie asked if the 2023 12-Year Program will reflect the funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Mr. Keane answered yes.

Mr. Shifflet added that since the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) was signed during the current Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) we are working on updating the current 2021 TIP/TYP Program to reflect the new funding in FFY 2022. Mr. Shifflet added that we are still awaiting final apportionments of Federal-aid highway program funds authorized by BIL from the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

PENNSYLVANIA LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND FREIGHT MOVEMENT PLAN: By Brian Funkhouser

Mr. Brian Funkhouser from Michael Baker International briefed the STC on the update underway for Pennsylvania's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Freight Movement Plan (FMP).

Mr. Funkhouser highlighted the challenges of transportation planning amidst accelerating change including:

- The COVID-19 pandemic and its dramatic changes to transportation demand.
- Supply chain disruptions.
- Social unrest and the push to address equity-related problems.
- Growth in vehicle electrification with the ambitious goals for widespread adoption.
- Impacts of climate change and bold environmental commitments.
- Major federal legislation and investment to help address the nation's infrastructure needs.

Mr. Funkhouser reiterated the emphasis on integrating transportation planning, programming, and performance measurement throughout the development of the two plans. He explained how both the LRTP, and the FMP relate to the TYP and TPR.

Mr. Funkhouser discussed the implementation approach to the plans. He noted that the new iterations of the plans have focused on making them easy to implement.

Mr. Funkhouser discussed the draft Action Plan Tracker, which will track the status of key action plans throughout the implementation process.

The Plan Status – Recent and Upcoming Milestones

- Public Comment Period Completed.

- Maritime Administration (MARAD) and FHWA Engagement.
- Planning Partners – Fall Meeting.
- Implementation Preparation.
 - Implementation Guide.
 - 5-Year Action Plan and Tracker.
- Finalization and Adoption of Plans.
- Implementation Start – January 2022.

Upcoming Plan Implementation and Governance

- Leadership involvement in implementation.
- Progress reporting to the Program Management Committee (PMC) (2 times per year).
- PMC direction/feedback on key actions and initiatives.
- STC periodic updates.

Mr. Funkhouser also discussed the Strategic Actions and Initiatives, which were initiated by the Department in-reach and continued through the stakeholder reviews, the refinement and gap closure, the internal communication, and the implementation process.

Mr. Funkhouser highlighted the implementation sample actions and initiatives for the LRTP including:

- Developing a Data Repository to be used for informing long-range planning and freight planning for PennDOT and partners.
- Including Operations performance measures in the 2023 Transportation Performance Report.

Secretary Gramian asked about the completion date for the plans.

Mr. Funkhouser answered that the plans are scheduled to be completed by the end of the year.

Ms. Willian commented about the need to integrate data collected at the local level into long range transportation planning.

Mr. Funkhouser said that PennDOT already possesses a rich database, but there is a need to diversify the data sources, which is why the data repository is being created. He added that there is also an effort to automate the data integration process in the upcoming data repository.

Secretary Gramian noted that the extension of broadband across the state is key to an effective data-driven transportation decision making. She added that there are various initiatives going on to replace legacy systems and improve data-driven decision making.

PA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC)

TAC Vice-Chair, Mr. Mark Murawski gave a brief update discussing the Committee’s ongoing studies including:

- *Public Transit Demand and Post-Pandemic Mobility Planning and Address Economic Disparities in Rural PA by Increasing Transportation Options.*

Mr. Murawski noted that the study team is developing a survey to collect input from stakeholders and the public to gather data for the study.

- *Demand for Alternate Uses of State Right-of-Way.*

Mr. Murawski said that the TAC voted to create an Ad Hoc Committee to address the Alternate Use of State Right of Way.

- *Importance of and Funding for Pedestrian Transportation.*

Mr. Murawski explained that the TAC voted to postpone the kick-off meeting of this study to give the Department and the consulting team more time to refine the scope of work.

Mr. Keane commented that the Active Transportation Plan is addressing the scope of work for the *Importance of and Funding for Pedestrian Transportation*, therefore, the option to table the study topic is possible.

Executive Deputy Secretary

Ms. Melissa Batula, P.E., Executive Deputy Secretary, gave an update about the COVID-19 related funding challenges, ongoing equitable transportation initiatives, the PennDOT Pathways program P3 Major Bridge Project, and the Transportation Revenue Options Commission Report.

Ms. Batula explained that although COVID-19 has exacerbated funding issues, the \$400 million from the Federal relief package and the \$270 million from the State have helped the Department maintained operations.

Ms. Batula said that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, which was just signed into law, will also help for the coming year.

Ms. Batula discussed PennDOT's equity and inclusion in transportation initiatives. She noted that the Department is focused on being an inclusive workplace, and outreach to make sure that everyone's voice is being heard is being conducted.

Ms. Batula also discussed the Mentor Protégé Program (MPP) Pilot. She said that the pilot program is designed to provide Disadvantaged Business Enterprises (DBE) with additional training and mentoring. This allows for them to gain more work codes to build capacity and add to qualifications packages. The program will address the 2018 Disparity Study findings in the Prime Construction and Consulting market for DBEs.

Ms. Batula noted that the Transportation Revenue Options Commission's report recommendations are being explored for implementation.

On the major bridge P3 initiative, Ms. Batula explained that the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process is ongoing for seven projects. She added that the public comment period continues with in-person meetings being held.

Ms. Batula noted that the request for proposals was issued and the procurement for design has started.

Mr. Ritchie asked if there is concern about the procurement moving forward without environmental clearance for the projects.

Ms. Batula answered that the pre-contract terms allow for adjustments in case there are any setbacks in the environmental clearance process.

Administration

Ms. Melissa Batula, P.E, Executive Deputy Secretary, gave an update for the Administration Deputate. Ms. Batula said that the Department resubmitted its DBE goal methodology 2021-2023 triennial plan to FHWA.

Ms. Batula discussed the Bureau of Innovation's Virtual Innovation Days held for federal, state, and local government transportation representatives across Pennsylvania from November 2nd -4th, 2021. She explained that the three-day virtual event consisted of two concurrent sessions each morning and afternoon focusing on innovative topics including technology and digital project delivery, maintenance equipment, techniques, and materials; enhanced design and construction approaches; multimodal transportation planning; and tools to reduce traffic congestion and enhance safety.

Ms. Batula said that from August 2021 through October 2021, PennDOT's Welcome Centers served 762,351 customers, making 3,243 reservations for 3,500 travelers, generating \$431,028.61 in tourism revenue for the Commonwealth.

Driver and Vehicle Services

Mr. Kurt Myers, Deputy Secretary for Driver and Vehicle Services (DVS) gave an update about the Driver and Vehicle Services Deputate.

Mr. Myers discussed the 25th annual Operation Safe Stop, which was conducted on October 20, 2021. The statewide initiative is held in conjunction with local and state police departments, school districts, and pupil transportation providers to conduct enforcement and, raise public awareness about the consequences of improper passing of school buses.

Mr. Myers noted that the Operation reported 252 violations of the law, down from 288 reported in 2019; And convictions for breaking the School Bus Stopping Law decreased to 314 in 2020 from 726 in 2019.

Mr. Shelly asked if any of the school buses participating in the operation were equipped with cameras.

Mr. Myers said he is not sure but will follow up.

Mr. Shelly asked if there are any indications the Federal Government will relax commercial driver's license (CDL) requirements for school bus drivers.

Mr. Myers said that he is not aware of any changes.

Highway and Bridge Program

Acting Deputy Secretary Mr. Michael Keiser, P.E., gave an update about the Highway Administration Deputate.

Mr. Keiser said that the new funding will not yet be reflected on the 2021 TIP. He added that the TIP will be updated as FHWA issues guidance and funding charts.

Mr. Kaiser explained that the 2021 letting program has been increased to \$2 billion due to funding provided by the General Assembly and the Wolf Administration, and the 2022 letting program increased to \$2.5 billion. He added that the 2022 program increase is due to funding from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

Mr. Keiser discussed winter maintenance saying that Department is gearing up for the upcoming winter. He explained that temporary operators hiring is ongoing but CDL availability continues to be a challenge. Mobile teams will be utilized where needed.

Mr. Ritchie congratulated the Department for the completion of the Capital Beltway construction project.

Multimodal Transportation

Report Stands.

Office of Planning

Deputy Secretary for Planning, Mr. Larry Shifflet gave a brief update about his Deputate.

Mr. Shifflet said that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act includes a special bridge program funding for which PA will receive \$1.6 billion for bridge replacement and repairs over 5 years.

COMMISSIONERS REPORT:

Mr. James Kingsborough attended the I-81 Improvement Strategy virtual meeting on December 14, 2021, at 7:00 p.m.

OTHER BUSINESS:

2022 Meeting Dates and Locations

(All meetings are scheduled for 10 AM to 12 PM)

- Wednesday, February 16, 2022

- Wednesday, May 18, 2022
- Wednesday, August 17, 2022
- Wednesday, December 14, 2022

ON A MOTION by Mr. Ronald Drnevich and seconded by Ms. Page Willan, the 2022 STC business meeting dates were approved.

NEXT MEETING:

The next STC quarterly meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, February 16, 2022.**

ADJOURNMENT:

ON A MOTION by Mr. Frank Paczewski and seconded by Mr. Chad Amond, the STC quarterly meeting was adjourned at 12:05 p.m.