

**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

RURAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE

July 22, 2020

10:00 AM

SAP&DC Conference Room and Zoom

Altoona, PA

ACTION SUMMARY

The following are the major actions taken by the Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee (RTCC) at its regular meeting held on July 22, 2020 at the SAP&DC in Altoona, PA and virtually on Zoom.

1. Approved the May 13, 2020, RTCC meeting minutes as presented.
2. Approved the FY 2021-2024 Highway and Bridge TIP, FY 2021-2024 Public Transit TIP, Memorandum of Understanding, Public Involvement Summary, and the RPO Self-Certification Resolution as presented.
3. Approved the release of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) for a 45-day public comment period pending the incorporation of FHWA's comments.
4. Approved pursuing a HSIP Study with the remaining UPWP funding extended from FY 19/20 and seek supplemental funding to pursue a Local Bridge Elimination Study.

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MEETING MINUTES

I. Welcome

The following members were present at the meeting:

- Commissioner Barry Dallara, Bedford County
- Commissioner Jeff Thomas, Huntingdon County
- Commissioner Colleen Dawson, Somerset County
- Mark Tobin, PennDOT Central Office
- Tom Prestash, PennDOT District 9-0
- Steve Howsare, SAP&DC
- Brandon Carson, SAP&DC

Others in attendance included:

- Commissioner Gerald Walker, Somerset County
- Frank Hampton, PennDOT Central Office
- Vince Greenland, PennDOT District 9-0
- Dave Lybarger, PennDOT District 9-0
- Anne Stich, PennDOT District 9-0
- Gene Porochniak, FHWA
- John Breneman, Senator Corman's Office
- Walter Russell, Representative Irvin's Office
- Brandon Peters, Organization

Each participant received a meeting packet that included:

- Agenda
- May 13, 2020 RTCC Meeting Minutes
- Pennsylvania Corridor N Completion Analysis & Impact Study Draft Interim Report 2
- Southern Alleghenies RPO TIP Adjustments
- 2021-2024 Southern Alleghenies RPO TIP – RPO Self-Certification Resolution
- Tentative Southern Alleghenies RPO LRTP 2042 Development Schedule
- Southern Alleghenies LRTP 2042 – RFP Initial Task Priorities

II. Review and Approval of the May 13, 2020 RTCC Meeting Minutes

Tom Prestash welcomed the committee to the meeting and Brandon Carson conducted roll call. Tom asked that the committee review the May 13, 2020, RTCC meeting minutes included in the packet.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Jeff Thomas made a motion to approve the May 13, 2020, RTCC meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner Collen Dawson seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

III. Corridor N US 219 Study Update

Brandon Peters informed the committee that at the last RTTC meeting an update of the larger interim report was given, which was received the evening before the meeting. The results from the public.com survey have been included in the meeting packet. A total of 1,300 unique responses were received from almost 200 respondents. The information received was very good and really delved into how it will impact the local businesses. Almost all of the comments were in support of the completion of Route 219. The consultant was unable to do many of the site visits due to COVID-19 but was able to schedule a few in town next week. There was a discussion about the modelling effort at the RTTC meeting and Metro Analytics is currently working on updating a few things in that section of the report. Additional data is being collected but the important thing the data does show is the north/south corridors in the region need additional capacity, and the completion of this corridor will provide that. Brandon has a call scheduled with Metro Analytics to discuss what they would like to see in the remainder of the report and to discuss extending the contract through August due to the delays from COVID-19. ARC is extending available funds through September to cover this cost.

Tom gave a quick update on the status of the request to add the additional section of Route 219 to the critical rail freight corridor. Currently the Program Center is finalizing the information and anticipates sending the letter to FHWA for review the end of this week or beginning of next week.

Tom also noted that he has been in contact with Maryland to discuss the possibility of transferring some ARC or APD funds to PA, as was mentioned in the past. To date, he has not received a response from Maryland's FHA. Commissioner Gerald Walker asked if it would be appropriate to reach out to Senator Edwards to get assistance in getting an answer on this. Tom responded that it would be very appropriate to ask if he can get an updated status. Commissioner Walker agreed to contact him.

Tom also noted he has talked to both Deputy Secretary Shifflet and Secretary Gramian and she is still committed to meeting with the stakeholders after the completion of the study.

Once completed, PennDOT can have a conversation on the statewide level and then schedule the stakeholder meeting with the Secretary in Somerset.

IV. FY 2019-2022 TIP Modifications and Amendments

Dave Lybarger reviewed the FY 2019-2022 TIP Modifications with the committee answering any questions they had. There were no amendments requiring approval.

Commissioner Thomas asked about a bridge project on Wilson Road that he did not see listed on the TIP. David responded that it is on the FY 2021 program that will take effect in October. The project is scheduled to be scoped in the near future. Commissioner Thomas also thanked PennDOT and everyone that was involved in the Pennsylvania Avenue Linear Park Corridor Project in Mount Union that was recently awarded funding. This project has been years in the making and he is very pleased to finally see it getting started.

V. FY 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program

Brandon Carson informed the committee that the FY 2021-2024 TIP is now ready for adoption. The outreach process began two years ago and at the last RTCC meeting the Draft FY 2021-2024 TIP was released for public comment. The FY 2021-2024 TIP will take affect October 1, 2020, and the RPO is already beginning the process for the FY 2023-2026 TIP. Brandon Peters reviewed the public comment with the committee. A significant amount of feedback was received even with the COVID-19 situation. A virtual public meeting was held on May 21, 2020, rather than the usual four public meetings with one in each county, and thirty people attended. Nine written comments were received (seven from organizations and two from private citizens) and all concerned Route 219. He reviewed a summary of the comments and noted that all of the comments were included as well. The RPO responded to all of the comments informing them that the committees would discuss the comments at the RTTC and RTCC meetings for inclusion on future TIPs but the project is currently unfunded. The only other document that was not included in the last version of the FY 2021-2024 TIP the committee reviewed is the Self Certification Resolution. This means that the RPO agrees to abide by the Title VI/EJ Requirements, the DBE Requirements, the ADA Requirements, and the TIP Financial Constraint and Capacity Requirements. He asked for a motion to approve the Public Involvement Summary, FY 2021-2024 Highway and Bridge TIP, FY 2021-2024 Public Transit TIP, Memorandum of Understanding, and the RPO Self-Certification Resolution.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Jeff Thomas made a motion to approve the FY 2021-2024 Highway and Bridge TIP, FY 2021-2024 Public Transit TIP, Memorandum of Understanding, Public Involvement Summary, and the RPO Self-Certification Resolution as presented. Commissioner Barry Dallara seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Tom thanked everyone for all their work on the TIP.

Brandon Peters added that the tentative FY 2023 Program Development Timeline was emailed to the committee members. He just wanted to make everyone aware that it was available.

VI. 2020 Public Participation Plan

Brandon Peters informed the committee that the Public Participation Plan (PPP) has been reviewed by the RTTC, this committee, PennDOT District 9, PennDOT Central Office, the Bureau of Equal Opportunity and FHWA. The RPO has received some feedback and is now ready to put the PPP out for a 45-day public comment period. The public comment period will begin in the next few weeks and the document will receive final approval at the December meeting. One part of our recently adopted UPWP is the Limited English Proficiency Plan (LEP). It does not require a public comment period but will be included with the PPP. There are a few additional comments from FHWA that need to be incorporated before putting it out for public comment.

With no further discussion, Brandon Carson made a motion to approve the release of the Public Participation Plan (PPP) for a 45-day public comment period pending the incorporation of FHWA's comments. Steve Howsare seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

VII. 2042 Southern Alleghenies LRTP

Brandon Peters reviewed the tentative RPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) development schedule with the committee. This plan covers a 20-year horizon. The RPO began discussions in May on how to proceed and meetings were held with PennDOT and FHWA beginning on July 2nd.

Due to the pandemic, there were some funds remaining in the FY 18/20 UPWP. An extension for this funding, which was just short of \$50,000, was approved through March 1, 2021. The RPO proposes to use the additional funds to kick off the LRTP. At the RTTC meeting, they were asked to submit a prioritized task list that could be included in an RFP for a consultant. He reviewed the options and tasks selected. The Local Bridge Elimination Study and HSIP Study were the top two. As there is not enough funding to cover both, this committee needs to select one for completion today to begin the RFP process.

Commissioner Dallara requested the LRTP also include the need for additional funding to support transportation improvement projects as funding continues to decrease with more fuel-efficient vehicles. Tom agreed that there is definitely a need for additional legislation to provide funding to bridge the gap. It is appropriate for the RPO to write our local legislators to voice our concerns of how as the need for transportation funding increases, the funding continues to decrease. PennDOT can provide the supporting documentation to back this up. If this continues, soon the RPO will not even be able to maintain what it has.

Brandon Peters will draft the letter and PennDOT will provide the supporting documentation. Brandon will provide the letter to the committee to review before sending out. Frank added this would be an excellent topic to add to the LRTP.

There was some discussion about verbiage on the bridge study – eliminate vs decommission – and using TIP funding to remove the bridges. PennDOT reminded the committee that TIP funds can be used but there is still a local cost as well. Brandon reminded the committee that there is the potential for supplemental planning funds that could be used for this as well. The committee asked how much HSIP funding has been brought in over two years. Dave responded that the RPO can receive several million. They are competing statewide, but this would bolster our applications so we can get more dollars.

With no further discussion, Steve Howsare made a motion to pursue the HSIP Study with the remaining UPWP funding extended from FY 19/20 and seek supplemental funding to pursue a Local Bridge Elimination Study. Commissioner Barry Dallara seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

VIII. Other Business

There was no other business to discuss.

IX. Adjournment

Commissioner Jeff Thomas made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:08 AM.

NOTE: The next meeting of the RTCC is scheduled for December 16, 2020, at the SAP&DC beginning at 10:00 AM.

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ACTION ITEMS

Date Issued	Action Items	By Whom	Due Date
July 22, 2020	Reach out to Maryland State Senator George Edwards to discuss nuances with sharing a portion of the ARC APD funds with PennDOT.	Commissioner Gerald Walker	No date given
July 22, 2020	Draft a letter from the RPO to our local legislators to voice our concerns of how as the need for transportation funding increases, the funding continues to decrease and provide the letter to the RTCC to review before sending out. PennDOT will provide supporting documentation.	Brandon Peters & PennDOT	No date given