

**HAGERSTOWN/EASTERN PANHANDLE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE
May 18, 2022**

The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee held a meeting on Wednesday, May 18, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. both in person [at the Eastern Panhandle Regional Airport in Martinsburg, WV] and 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.

CALL TO ORDER

The Chairman called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m.

ROLL CALL

The following were in attendance: Matt Mullenax, HEPMPO Executive Director; Jill Baker, Washington County Dept. of Planning & Zoning; Kevin Sullivan, Evan Snyder and Perry Su, WV DOH; Charles Walker, EPTA; Laura Hoffmaster, Berkeley County; Jim Golden, Berkeley County; Kathy Maher, City of Hagerstown; Tyson Byrne, MDOT; Edward Erfurt, City of Ranson; Jennifer Wishmyer, Region IX; Kari Snyder, MDOT; and Sean Varsolona, MD SHA.

MINUTES

Motion and Vote: Mr. Erfurt made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 16, 2022 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wishmyer and unanimously approved with Ms. Maher abstaining from the vote.

NEW BUSINESS

-TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Draft FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program [Resolution 2022-13]

Mr. Mullenax announced that staff has completed the draft FY 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program. The draft was advertised for public comment from April 16 to May 17. Physical copies of the draft were placed in the libraries in each of the County seats. FHWA-MD submitted one comment seeking to have federal aid functional class for projects identified in the appendix, which staff has addressed and FHWA has approved. No other public comments were received. Staff recommends approval of the TIP as presented.

Motion and Vote: Ms. Wishmyer made a motion to recommend approval of the FY 2023-2026 TIP [Resolution 2022-13] to the Interstate Council as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Erfurt and unanimously approved.

-LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Long Range Transportation Plan Update [Resolution 2022-14]

Mr. Mullenax reported that staff and the consultants have completed the draft Direction 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan. The draft Plan was placed in the libraries in each of the County seats and advertised for public comment from April 16 to May 17. Three public meetings were held in May (Ranson,

Martinsburg and Hagerstown) to review the draft Plan and project lists. A letter was sent to all resource agencies and a project StoryMap was developed. Staff has been tracking comments and the consultants will address these comments in the Plan's final version.

Mr. Jim Frazier of Michael Baker International provided a brief presentation of the Plan's highlights. The Plan meets all Federal guidelines, is based on the Transportation Performance Measure principles, and meets all BIL funding and investment strategies. The Plan identifies goals and supporting objectives to meet these goals.

Mr. Frazier noted there were 650 participants that completed our surveys; 500 on-line responses and 150 responses from the Intercept surveys. Priorities cited were roadway congestion, safety, environmental issues, land use and economic prosperity. He briefly reviewed other responses that were received during the survey. Transportation needs including asset management, transit and freight, active transportation, etc. were also discussed in the Plan. Mr. Frazier discussed employment opportunities and projected populations. He discussed funding and which projects could be funded for both Maryland and West Virginia.

Staff recommends approval of the LRTP as presented.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Erfurt made a motion to recommend approval of the Long Range Transportation Plan [Resolution 2022-14] to the Interstate Council as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker and unanimously approved.

Dual Highway Speed Management Study

Mr. Mullenax announced that the draft Study is currently out for public comment, which will conclude on May 30th. A public meeting is scheduled for May 26 at the Washington County Free Library in Hagerstown. The Study includes options to improve traffic safety for all road users along the Dual Highway between Cannon Avenue and Cleveland Avenue. Improvements such as additional lighting and sidewalk extensions and a new signalized mid-block crossing have been proposed. Staff and the consultants have worked closely with MDOT SHA and the City of Hagerstown to develop this draft. Public comment will be incorporated into the final version of the Study.

EPTA Commuter Bus Service Implementation Plan

Mr. Mullenax stated that the draft Plan is out for public comment and will conclude on May 30th. A public meeting will be held on May 19th at EPTA offices. The Plan includes proposed times, operational procedures and stops for a proposed commuter bus service from the Eastern Panhandle to Ashburn, VA. There is a draft MOU for EPTA's bus bay location with Loudoun County at the Ashburn Metro Station South Pavilion. Staff and the consultants have worked closely with both the public and private partners to develop this Plan. All public comment will be incorporated into the Plan's final version.

Mr. Mullenax also noted that the Loudoun County Board of Supervisors are moving forward with a study to investigate including commuter options from north and west of Loudoun County, which would include Berkeley and Jefferson Counties.

Regional Freight Plan

Mr. Mullenax explained that one of the top future study priorities of the 2050 LRTP is to develop the area's first Regional Freight Plan. With the passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, travel patterns

associated with e-purchasing and the on-going development of new warehouses/distribution centers, this Plan is of the utmost importance. A scope of work has been presented by our consultants who will develop a regional freight profile, regional freight economic analysis and an action plan. The proposed Plan will especially aid the MPO in future Critical Urban Freight Corridor designations. Staff has reviewed the scope of work, which meets the proposed FY 2023 budget, and recommends approval.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Erfurt made a motion to recommend approval of the Regional Freight Plan scope of work to the Interstate Council as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker and unanimously approved.

Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Mr. Mullenax stated that another top priority of the 2050 LRTP is to update the 2016 Regional Bicycle Plan. This update will incorporate key trends and potential strategies for enhancing biking and walking in our region. The Plan itself will focus on bicycle/pedestrian demand and facilities, safety concerns, equity, education, policies and funding opportunities. Development of this Plan will also fulfill the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law's requirement that MPO's expend 2.5% of their annual budget on "Complete Streets" planning activities. Staff has reviewed the scope of work, which meets the proposed FY 2023 budget, and recommends approval.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend approval of the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan scope of work to the Interstate Council as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Erfurt and unanimously approved.

HEPMPO Website Upgrade

Mr. Mullenax explained that during the development of our Title VI Plan last year, it became apparent that our current website needs to be upgraded to meet all ADA and Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. The site search needs upgraded and current website experience on mobile/tablet needs improved. The consultant will setup Google analytics and configure all 301 redirects for the website. Staff has reviewed the scope of work, which meets the proposed FY 2023 budget, and recommends approval.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend approval of the HEPMPO Website Upgrade scope of work to the Interstate Council as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Erfurt and unanimously approved.

-ORGANIZATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Draft FY 2023 UPWP [Resolution 2022-15]

Mr. Mullenax stated that the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) contains the proposed budget and work program for the next fiscal year. There will be three major plans we will be focusing on in FY 2023: the Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, the Regional Freight Plan, and an upgrade to the HEPMPO's website. The draft UPWP was presented at our March 16th meeting and was advertised for public comment from April 16th to May 17th. No public comments were received. Staff recommends approval of the FY 2023 UPWP as presented.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Walker made a motion to recommend approval of the FY 2023 Unified Planning Work Program [Resolution 2022-15] to the Interstate Council as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wishmyer and unanimously approved.

Public Participation Plan Update [Resolution 2022-16]

Mr. Mullenax noted that our current PPP was updated and approved in May 2019. The Plan recommends a review of our procedures every three years. Staff presented an updated draft of the Plan at the March 16th meeting. Updates were made to photos, websites, dates and federal legislation references as well as adding housing authorities to our resource agency list per the BIL. The draft PPP was advertised for public comment from April 1st to May 15th; no public comments were received. Staff recommends approval of the Public Participation Plan as presented.

Motion and Vote: Ms. Wishmyer made a motion to recommend approval of the Public Participation Plan [Resolution 2022-16] to the Interstate Council as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Walker and unanimously approved.

Financial Status Update

Ms. Baker reported that we have expended approximately 80% of our current budget. The majority of expenses were for the Long Range Transportation Plan, special studies and administrative costs. We are currently on task and on budget.

Director's Report

Mr. Mullenax gave a brief update on the following:

- The 2022 WVDOT Planning Conference was held on April 26 – 28 at Cacapon State Park and was very successful.
- The MPO has been partnering with MDOT and Washington County to submit an INFRA grant as well as a Rural grant for the Phase II, I-81 widening project. Staff has been providing supporting information from the TISMO study and previous safety analyses. The grant application is due on May 23rd.
- A RAISE grant was submitted by the WVDOT for improvements along WV 51 on the west end of Charles Town.
- The MPO continues to support EPTA with its Transit Center Project. A project kick-off meeting was recently held and a detailed facilities meeting will be held on Monday, May 23rd.
- The US 340/Augustine Avenue interchange in Jefferson County is being examined for possible major geometric improvements and upgrades. The WVDOH Design Division is looking at alternatives as they develop a preliminary engineering study.
- The MPO is working with the City of Ranson to develop safety improvements at some of the city intersections. A safety analysis shows the crash rate at WV 9 and Flowing Springs connector road is higher than the State average. WVDOT is programming improvements on site, securing new lighting and adding a new acceleration lane.
- A hiring timeline for a new transportation planner has been set. The position will be advertised for 30 days, interviews will be conducted at the end of June, references will be checked, an offer will be made and we are hoping to have a new planner by August 1st.

-OTHER BUSINESS

Public Comment

There were no citizens present.

Future Meetings

The next scheduled meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee is Wednesday, August 17, 2022 at 10:30 a.m. This meeting will be held in person, with a call-in option, at the Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport in Martinsburg, WV.

-ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Walker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 11:30 a.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Wishmyer and was so ordered by the Chairman.

Respectfully submitted,



Matt Mullenax, Executive Director

