

**HAGERSTOWN/EASTERN PANHANDLE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
INTERSTATE COUNCIL
May 17, 2023**

The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization Interstate Council held a meeting on Wednesday, May 17, 2023 at 1:30 p.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 Vice-Chair called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following were in attendance: Elaine Bartoldson, Vice-Chair, EPTA; Matt Mullenax, HEPMPO Executive Director; Tyson Byrne, MDOT; Pam Mohn, Washington County Division of Engineering; Jim Bender, City of Hagerstown Engineering Department; Brian Carr, WV DOH; Jim Barnhart and Steve Catlett, Berkeley County Council; Rachel Snavelly, Region IX; and Bob Anderson, City of Ranson

In order to conduct this meeting with a quorum, Jim Bender was assigned Kevin Cerrone's proxy (Washington County Transit).

Also present were: Michaela McDonough, HEPMPO; Kevin Sullivan, WV DOH; Keith McIntosh; Chris Strovel, Jasmine Champion, FHWA Maryland; Elizabeth Ricketts, City of Charles Town; Jennifer Smith & Krista Hoffman, Berkeley County Development Authority; and Debra Eckard, Washington County Dept. of Planning & Zoning.

MINUTES

Motion and Vote: Mr. Catlett made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 15, 2023 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Snavelly and unanimously approved.

NEW BUSINESS

-LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Regional Freight Plan

Mr. Mullenax reported that staff and our consultants met with the Study Advisory Committee to review coordination efforts and data assessments, identify project ideas to address freight needs and assessed a wide range of available strategies. As part of this effort, a review was made of the draft Critical Urban Freight Corridor Analysis. The draft Plan will be released on May 18th for public comment. The public comment period will run from May 18th to June 18th. Three public meetings will be held as follows: June 1st in the Martinsburg Public Library; June 5th at the Hagerstown Library in Conference Room 334; and June 8th in Charles Town in the Commissioners' Meeting Room. All meetings will begin at 5 pm. Based on public feedback, we anticipate the final plan to be completed by June 30th.

Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan

Mr. Mullenax noted that staff and our consultants met with the Study Advisory Committee to review public survey results, evaluate demand and performance safety analysis, provide mapping updates and discuss potential project ideas. The draft Plan will be released on May 18th for public comment. The public comment period will run from May 18th to June 18th. The public meetings will be held in conjunction with the Regional Freight Plan beginning at 6 pm on the dates and in the locations previously mentioned for

the Regional Freight Plan. Based on public feedback, we anticipate the final plan to be completed by June 30th.

Both meetings will be held in person with a virtual option.

HEPMPO Website Upgrade

Mr. Mullenax reminded members that staff provided a brief demonstration of the upgraded website at the March meeting. Our consultants are working with Washington County IT staff to finalize the website set-up on their servers. The new website will be ADA compliant in terms of web content accessibility guidelines. We hope to have the new website in production by the end of May. Our consultants will provide training to staff on updating the new site.

Regional Safety Action Plan

Mr. Mullenax explained that a regional safety action plan was recommended in our Long Range Transportation Plan. This Plan is aimed at preventing transportation-related fatalities and serious injuries in the region and will update the MPO's 2019 Regional Traffic Safety Study. The Plan will cover the planning requirement under the "Safe Streets for All" Federal program and will allow our local government members to apply for future construction funds. The Plan also meets the IJA's "Complete Streets" planning requirements for MPOs. Staff has reviewed the Scope of Work prepared by our consultant with the Technical Advisory Committee during its morning meeting and recommends approval to the Interstate Council.

Motion and Vote: Ms. Mohn made a motion to approve the Regional Safety Action Plan scope of work contingent upon approval of the FY 2024 UPWP. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnhart and unanimously approved.

Congestion Management Process

Mr. Mullenax stated that this Plan was also identified and recommended in the Long Range Transportation Plan. This Plan evaluates regional congestion trends using selected travel time performance measures, defining priority corridors, monitoring other modes of travel, assessing potential corridor strategies and evaluating the impacts of recently completed and on-going projects. Staff as well as the Technical Advisory Committee has reviewed the Scope of Work and recommends approval to the Interstate Council.

Mr. Mullenax noted that both plans will address the two most frequent concerns we receive from the public: safety and congestion.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Byrne made a motion to approve the Congestion Management Process scope of work contingent upon approval of the FY 2024 UPWP. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mohn and unanimously approved.

-ORGANIZATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Draft FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Mr. Mullenax introduced the draft FY 2024 UPWP which was sent to the ISC in April. The UPWP contains the MPO's proposed budget and work program for the upcoming fiscal year. We will be focusing on two major planning projects: the Regional Safety Action Plan and the Congestion Management Process as previously described. Mr. Mullenax explained that we will provide an option for the City of Hagerstown to utilize our consultants for their "Safe Streets for All" planning grant, if needed. The draft budget includes 10% salary increases for staff which is on par with recent local government increases. Mr.

Mullenax explained that the draft UPWP was advertised for public comment from April 15th to May 16th as well as being posted online and hard copies were placed in the region's three County-seat libraries.

Mr. Mullenax stated that comments were received from the City of Charles Town in support of the draft UPWP and to their commitment to partner on the Regional Safety Action Plan and any "safe streets" projects. MD FTA requested that the Federal program identify FTA funds that we receive as part of the 5305 funding. WV FTA requested that the funding amounts for special studies we will be performing next fiscal year be adjusted. This does not change the overall bottom line within this work task. FHWA reviewed the draft UPWP and had no comments.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Barnhart made a motion to approve the FY 2024 UPWP as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Catlett and unanimously approved.

Maryland Critical Urban Freight Corridor Designation

Mr. Mullenax presented a brief overview of regional freight networks in our region explaining that the primary freight system is the interstates designated by the US DOT and spreading out to critical urban and critical rural corridors. These designations are important because: it allows for funding of projects through allocation programs, makes them eligible for discretionary grants, may provide additional scoring emphasis when applying for additional grants, and helps the MPO focus on certain corridors for freight analysis in the LRTP as well as for future study. Mr. Mullenax explained that following the 2020 census, the WV DOT allocated 20 miles for designation in the rural area and MDOT has allocated 10 miles for designation.

Mr. Mullenax explained how the freight corridor candidates are chosen by evaluating the following criteria: truck volume, freight related employment by proximity, total employment, proximity to overnight truck parking spaces, and planning freight development. Recommendations for Critical Urban Freight Corridors in Maryland are as follows: Crayton Boulevard (.96 mile); Halfway Boulevard (2.95 miles), Showalter Road (1.06 miles), MD 63 (1.58 miles), Maugans Avenue (.33 mile), Sharpsburg Pike (0.79 mile), Hopewell Road (1.76 miles), East Oak Ridge Drive (.32 mile) and Downsville Pike (.22 mile) for a total of 9.97 miles.

Motion and Vote: Ms. Mohn made a motion to approve the Maryland Critical Urban Freight Corridor Designation as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Byrne and unanimously approved.

West Virginia Critical Urban Freight Corridor Designation

Mr. Mullenax presented the following recommendations for the West Virginia Critical Urban Freight Corridor Designation (N. Berkeley) as follows: WV 9 (1.32 miles), Harlan Springs Road (.43 mile), GM Access Road (.8 mile), Hammonds Mill Road (.53 mile), Mid Atlantic Parkway (1.15 miles), US 11 (Dupont Road to Langston Blvd.) (1.13 miles), US 11 (Mid Atlantic Parkway to Brilliant Stone Drive) (.55 mile) and US 11(I-81 Exit 23 to Crawford Quarry Road) (1.16 miles) for a total of 7.07 miles.

Mr. Mullenax presented the following recommendations for the West Virginia Critical Urban Freight Corridor Designation (S. Berkeley) as follows: WV 45/WV 9 (1.91 miles), WV 51 (.69 mile), Development Drive (.15 mile), Corning Way (.33 mile), Tabler Station Road/Business Park Drive (1.26 miles), US 11 (Business Park Drive to Consumer Drive) (1.31 miles), US 11 (Tabler Station Road to Fish Hatchery Road) (2.08 miles) and US 11 (WV 45 to Evans Run Drive) (1.18 miles) for a total of 8.91 miles.

Mr. Mullenax presented the following recommendations for the West Virginia Critical Urban Freight Corridor Designation (Jefferson) as follows: WV 9 (1.78 miles), US 340 South (1.03 miles), US 340 North

(WV 9 to Patrick Henry Way) (.56 mile), and US 340 North (CR230 to Shipley School Road) (.47 mile) for a total of 3.84 miles.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Catlett made a motion to approve the West Virginia Critical Urban Freight Corridor Designation as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carr and unanimously approved.

West Virginia Critical Rural Freight Corridor Designation

Mr. Mullenax presented the following recommendations for the West Virginia Critical Rural Freight Corridor Designation as follows: Development Drive (.83 mile), Corning Way (.29 mile), US 11 (.17 mile), US 340 (Patrick Henry Way to WV 230) (2.40 miles), and US 340 (Shipley School Road to Virginia state line) (3.56 miles) for a total of 7.25 miles.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Catlett made a motion to approve the West Virginia Critical Rural Freight Corridor Designation as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Carr and unanimously approved.

West Virginia Project Initiation Process

Mr. Mullenax announced that WV DOT has received approval of its STIP/TIP Operating Guidelines. These operating procedures provide a way for the MPOs to recommend to the WV DOT, Tier 1, Tier 2 and Tier 3 projects on different schedules. Staff will begin working on a formal project selection policy for SDBG funds which will be presented to the Interstate Council for review and consideration for adoption at the August meeting. Mr. Mullenax briefly explained each of the tiers, criteria to be considered and time frame for submittals. He explained there are upcoming deadlines that require expeditious consideration and staff is recommending the following projects:

- Tier 1 (Regionally Significant projects) – WV 9 West – this is a #1 priority for West Virginia as specified in our LRTP and is currently on the fiscal constrained list
- Tier 2 (Operational and Safety projects) – WV 9/GM Access Road near I-81; WV 9/Warm Springs Avenue near I-81; US 340/Patrick Henry Way in Charles Town; North Queen Street (WV 9/US11)/East Moler Avenue (WV45) in Martinsburg; King Street (US 11)/Raleigh Street in Martinsburg – Tier 2 projects were identified in the 2022 LRTP as top congestion intersections and top crash corridors

Motion and Vote: Mr. Catlett made a motion to approve the Tier 1 and Tier 2 projects as presented and to forward these projects to the WV DOT. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnhart and unanimously approved.

West Virginia Carbon Reduction Program

Mr. Mullenax noted that MDOT has been working on its carbon reduction study which should be released in June. He stated that WVDOT and their consultants have begun work on the WV State's Carbon Reduction Strategy which will ultimately lead to a future project submission form for MPOs. Until the submission form has been completed, MPOs have been encouraged to prevent any lapses in previously suballocated funds and projects should be programmed as soon as possible. Staff has reviewed potential projects that are eligible for 100% federal-cost share funding and recommends the Queen Street/Moler Avenue intersection pedestrian signal project and crosswalks in Martinsburg.

Motion and Vote: Ms. Snavelly made a motion to approve the US 11/WV 9/North Queen Street and WV 45/East Moler Avenue Pedestrian Signal Improvement project to the WV DOT as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Catlett and unanimously approved.

Financial Status Update

Ms. Eckard reported that approximately 55% of the overall budget for FY 2023 has been expended. More than half of the expenses for the third quarter were spent on our special studies. We will be wrapping up our special studies projects during the 4th quarter and we should expect the majority of expenses to again be in that category. Overall, we are on-task and on-budget.

Director's Report

Mr. Mullenax stated that a meeting was held with the Win-Fred MPO, State, and Federal partners regarding the new 2020 Urban Area that extends into Virginia. Win-Fred is currently reviewing the HEPMPO's MOU with Franklin County, PA which will be used as a guideline to develop an agreement between the HEPMPO and Win-Fred that will meet all Federal guidance. A follow-up meeting will be held next week with the Win-Fred legal counsel. An MOU will be presented for consideration at the August meeting.

Ms. McDonough presented several TIP adjustments that were received from the WVDOT just prior to the meeting. These adjustments will be included as Revision 5 to the WV TIP and will be formally presented at the August meeting.

- Jefferson Avenue – turn lane and traffic signal
- Tuscarora Creek Bridge – bridge rehabilitation
- Harlan Run Bridge – design study for bridge replacement
- Ridge Road/Morgan Grove – resurfacing
- Butts Mill Bridge – bridge repair
- Bunker Hill Mill – bridge replacement
- Old Mill Road Bridge – bridge repair
- GM Access Road Bridge – bridge repair
- Ranson North Mildred – resurfacing
- Arsenio Albert-Alvarez Memorial Bridge – bridge repair
- Bessemere Overhead Bridge – bridge repair
- Elk Branch – bridge rehabilitation
- Arden Nolville – resurfacing
- Hillside Drive Roundabout – construct roundabout
- Charles Town South George Street Pedestrian Improvement – construct sidewalks

Motion and Vote: Ms. Mohn made a motion to adjourn to Executive Session at 2:35 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Catlett and so ordered by the Vice-Chair.

EXECUTIVE SESSION

To discuss personnel matters that concern one or more specific individuals.

Motion and Vote: Ms. Mohn made a motion to return to Open Session at 2:40 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Catlett and so ordered by the Vice-Chair.

Motion and Vote: Mr. Barnhart made a motion to approve a 10% salary increase for Mr. Mullenax effective July 1, 2023. The motion was seconded by Ms. Snively and unanimously approved.

OTHER BUSINESS

Public Comment

There were no public comments.


Future Meetings

The next scheduled meeting of the Interstate Council is Wednesday, August 16, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. This meeting will be held in person at the Eastern West Virginia Regional Airport in Martinsburg, WV, with a call-in option.

-ADJOURNMENT

Mr. Catlett made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:45 p.m. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mohn and so ordered by the Vice-Chairman.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'E. Bartoldson', written over a horizontal line.

Elaine Bartoldson, Vice-Chair