

**HAGERSTOWN/EASTERN PANHANDLE  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
INTERSTATE COUNCIL  
May 15 2024**

The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization Interstate Council held a meeting on Wednesday, May 15, 2024 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 Chairperson called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

**ROLL CALL**

The following were in attendance: Elaine Bartoldson, Chairperson, EPTA; Jill Baker, Vice-Chairperson, Washington County Dept. of Planning & Zoning; Matt Mullenax, HEPMPO Executive Director; Dan Janousek, MDOT; Pam Mohn, Washington County Dept. of Engineering; Brian Carr, WV DOH; Jim Barnhart and Steve Catlett, Berkeley County Commission; Elizabeth Ricketts, City of Charles Town; Steve Stolipher, Jefferson County Commission; Andy Blake, City of Martinsburg; Rachel Snavelly, Region IX; and John Barr, Washington County Commissioner (arrived at 2:05).

For the purposes of conducting this meeting with a quorum, Kevin Cerrone, Director of Washington County Transit, assigned his proxy, in writing, to Jill Baker, Washington County Dept. of Planning & Zoning.

Also present were: Michaela McDonough, HEPMPO; Debra Eckard, Washington County Dept. of Planning & Zoning; Sean Varsolona, MD SHA; and Chris Strovel, Senator Capito's Office.

**MINUTES**

**Motion and Vote:** Mr. Barnhart made a motion to approve the minutes of the March 20, 2024 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blake and unanimously approved.

**-TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM**

**FY 2023-2026 WV Transportation Improvement Program Amendments**

Ms. McDonough presented the following adjustment for the FY 2023-2026 WV TIP.

**West Virginia Department of Transportation**

**Adjustments** [No formal action required]

- West Washington Street, J2021-05
  - **Change:** Add CON in FY 2024: \$750,000 (\$600,000 Federal; \$150,000 Local)

Ms. McDonough announced that several projects have also been obligated, as follows:

- Arsenio Albert Alvarez Memorial Bridge
- Jefferson Avenue Turn Lane & Traffic Signal
- Clarence Martin Memorial Bridge
- Charles Town South George Street Pedestrian Improvements
- SFY 24 BKAMPP – District 5 On-Systems Bridges

- D5 Guardrail Project

#### FY 2023-2026 MD Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

Ms. McDonough presented the following adjustments for the FY 2023-2026 MD TIP.

#### Washington County Transit

##### Adjustments [No formal action required]

- Operating Assistance – Section 5307, WT2023-02
  - **Change:** Increase FY 2024 funding to \$3,734,164 (\$1,867,082 Federal; \$1,363,368 Local; \$503,714 State)
- Capital Assistance – Preventative Maintenance, WT2023-03
  - **Change:** Increase FY 2026 funding to \$375,000 (\$300,000 Federal; \$37,500 Local; \$37,500 State)
- Capital Assistance – Small Paratransit Bus 504, WT2023-04
  - **Change:** Increase FY 2026 funding to \$105,000 (\$84,000 Federal; \$10,500 Local; \$10,500 State)

##### New Project

- Capital Assistance – Section 5339 Service Truck, WT2024-01
  - **Project Data:** FY 2025: \$60,000 (\$48,000 Federal ; \$6,000 Local; \$6,000 State)
- Capital Assistance – Section 5339 Oil/Water Separator, WT2024-02
  - **Project Data:** FY 2025: \$60,000 (\$48,000 Federal ; \$6,000 Local; \$6,000 State)

#### Draft FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program [Resolution 2024-08]

Ms. McDonough announced that the draft TIP was advertised for public comment from April 13<sup>th</sup> to May 14<sup>th</sup> as well as posted on-line and hard copies were placed in the region's three County-seat libraries. No public comments were received; no substantial comments were received from the State DOTs or Federal agency partners. Staff recommends adoption of the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program.

Mr. Mullenax stated that written correspondence was received from the City of Charles Town. These comments did not pertain to the content of the document but rather questions on the layout and organization of the document. Staff will follow-up with the City and provide clarification on the questions.

**Motion and Vote:** Ms. Mohn made a motion to adopt the FY 2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Catlett and unanimously approved.

#### Maryland Greenhouse Gases Performance Measures [Resolution 2024-09]

Ms. McDonough explained that MDOT has adopted Green House Gases (GHG) Performance Measures. The measure includes calculating baseline performance, setting statewide targets and submitting an initial report to FHWA by February 1, 2024. The GHG measure will be the percent change in tailpipe CO2 emissions on the National Highway System (NHS) compared to the 2022 reference year. The 2022 (current) baseline is 14.0 MMT (million metric tons). The target for 2025 is 13.4 MMT or a 4% decrease. Ms. McDonough noted that Maryland DOT has chosen to adopt these performance measures while WV DOT has chosen not to adopt them.

Mr. Mullenax explained that the Program is currently voluntary. The MPO can either adopt the States' performance measures or adopt its own targets. The Technical Advisory Committee, at its meeting, recommended adoption of MDOT's performance measures.

**Motion and Vote:** Ms. Baker made a motion to adopt MDOT's Green House Gases Performance Measures as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Mohn and unanimously approved.

#### **-LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN**

##### **Regional Safety Action Plan [Resolution 2024-10]**

Mr. Mullenax reported that the draft Safety Action Plan was advertised for public comment from April 12<sup>th</sup> to May 14<sup>th</sup> as well as posted on our website and hard copies were placed in our three County-seat libraries. Public meetings, both in person and virtual, were held in Martinsburg, Charles Town and Hagerstown in late April and early May. Written public comments were received and will be incorporated into the Plan.

The first comment was a request to extend the high injury network from its current termination on Route 9 at the Flowing Springs exit to the Fairfax Boulevard/Oakley intersection. After review of the crash data, staff included this location in the high injury network.

The second comment was a request to extend the high injury network on Halfway Boulevard from US Route 11 to Downsville Pike and on MacAfee Hill Road (in Cascade) from Buena Vista to Raven Rock Road. After review of the crash data, staff had no issue including these locations in the high injury network.

Mr. Mullenax noted that comments were also received from the City of Charles Town, which overall are very supportive of the Plan. There was one specific question asking for consideration of weighting non-State roadways since State DOTs are not eligible to apply for SS4A funding. Staff responded that such a consideration of differences in how road ownership may impact a high injury network might suggest the need for a safety action plan scaled to a municipal level. The MPO's data-driven analysis of the location and severity of vehicle involved crashes led to the identification of the high injury network at a regional level. While State DOTs are not eligible for SS4A funding, funding can be dedicated to State facilities if the local applicant has a documented agreement and partnership with the State DOT to address the State facility. These types of agreements are necessary to maximize SS4A opportunities in order to achieve a vision of zero fatalities.

Staff recommends approval of the Regional Safety Action Plan. The Technical Advisory Committee, at its meeting, recommended approval of the Plan.

**Motion and Vote:** Mr. Blake made a motion to approve the Regional Safety Action Plan as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnhart and unanimously approved.

Mr. Mullenax requested the establishment of a Safety Action Committee, which would meet annually to review performance metrics such as changes to killed and severely injured crashes, locations, etc. He recommended using the Steering Committee that was previously chosen and used for this Plan.

**Motion and Vote:** Ms. Baker made a motion to support the request for the establishment of a Safety Action Committee. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ricketts and unanimously approved.

##### **Congestion Management Process**

Mr. Mullenax explained that data from our Long-Range Transportation Plan, analysis of travel time data, public comments from an on-line survey, visual observations, etc. were used to create a list of priority

corridor locations. The draft CMP has been reviewed by our Stakeholder Committee and is being finalized for public comment. The public comment period is expected to be from May 20<sup>th</sup> to June 20<sup>th</sup>. One virtual only public meeting will be held on June 6<sup>th</sup> at 5 pm. The Plan will be finalized by the end of June.

#### **Hagerstown Safe Streets and Roads for All Action Plan**

Mr. Mullenax reported that our consultants have completed the initial crash analysis and are working on the equity data analysis. These efforts will aid in the development of the City's draft high injury network. The first stakeholder meeting is anticipated sometime this summer. In addition, a MetroQuest based public survey is being developed.

#### **-ORGANIZATIONAL ADMINISTRATION**

#### **Draft FY 2025 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) [Resolution 2024-11]**

Mr. Mullenax announced that the draft FY 2025 UPWP was advertised for public comment from April 13<sup>th</sup> to May 14<sup>th</sup> as well as posted on-line and hard copies placed in our region's three County-seat libraries. The UPWP contains the proposed budget and work program for fiscal year 2025. Staff will be focusing on six special planning studies as follows: the Title VI update; the EPTA Transit Development Plan update; the Corridor Safety Study on Virginia Avenue in Hagerstown; the Corridor Safety Study on Edwin Miller Boulevard in Martinsburg; the Corridor Safety Study on West Washington Street in Charles Town; and the Washington County Transit Facilities Expansion Plan. A 3.5% salary increase for staff, which is on par with recent local government increases, is included in the Program. Also included in the UPWP is the utilization of our general services contract by the City of Hagerstown to complete their SS4A Safety Action Plan. No public comments were received.

Mr. Mullenax noted that one change to the draft was made since the March meeting. Staff has moved funding from the Special Studies category for the purpose of procuring a new TIP management software. Our current vendor is being bought out by another company who has chosen to discontinue certain software products. Staff has issued an RFQ for a new software provider. This funding adjustment will not have an overall negative impact to the proposed budget; therefore, staff is recommending approval of the FY2025 UPWP.

**Motion and Vote:** Mr. Blake made a motion to approve the FY2025 Unified Planning Work Program as presented with the change in funding from special studies to procurement of new TIP management software. The motion was seconded by Mr. Janousek and unanimously approved.

Mr. Mullenax explained that our new consultant services contract begins on July 1<sup>st</sup>. We have six special planning studies programmed for the upcoming fiscal year. Mr. Mullenax asked the Interstate Council to consider authorizing him to review and approve the Scopes of Work for these special studies in order for the consultant to begin work earlier than under normal circumstances. The Scopes of Work could be provided to the Interstate Council if so desired.

**Motion and Vote:** Mr. Blake made a motion to authorize the Executive Director to review and approve the FY 2025 Scopes of Work for the special planning studies. The motion was seconded by Mr. Barnhart and unanimously approved.

#### **General Services Contract (FY2025-FY2027)**

Mr. Mullenax stated that our current general services contract expires on June 30<sup>th</sup>. During the RFP process, Michael Baker International submitted the only bid. Staff has reviewed Michael Baker's Qualifications and Experience, Technical Proposal and Financial Proposal as well as considered the quality of work performed under our current contract. The Evaluation Committee interviewed representatives

from Michael Baker International and reviewed the Financial Proposal and designated Baker as a responsible responsive responder. The Evaluation Committee and staff recommend acceptance of Baker's alternative price proposal to the Interstate Council.

**Motion and Vote:** Ms. Mohn made a motion to approve Michael Baker's alternative price proposal. The motion was seconded by Ms. Snavely and unanimously approved.

### Financial Status Update

Ms. Baker stated that a little more than 50% of the FY 2024 budget has been expended through the third quarter. Our special planning studies will be completed during the fourth quarter and a majority of our funds will be spent in this category.

### Director's Report

Mr. Mullenax gave a brief report on the following:

- The Dual Highway Sidewalks Phase 2 project is currently out for bid; bids will close on May 23<sup>rd</sup>. This project will complete sidewalk construction from Eastern Boulevard to All Start Court.
- The MDOT CRP (Carbon Reduction Program) grant submission recently closed. The MPO in conjunction with District 6 submitted an application for pedestrian signals at five intersections in downtown Hagerstown at the following locations: Washington and Mulberry Streets; Washington and Prospect Streets; Washington and Locust Streets; Franklin and Mulberry Streets; and Franklin and Locust Streets.
- The EPTA Transit Center received site plan approval from the Martinsburg Planning Commission on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Project bids closed on May 10<sup>th</sup>. It is anticipated that EPTA's Board will award the bid at its June 17<sup>th</sup> meeting.
- The MPO helped WVDOT to submit an INFRA grant for widening on I-81 from Exit 8 south to the Virginia state line. This submission also included the expansion of truck parking at rest areas and at the Spring Mills truck stop as well as the addition of ITS infrastructure.
- The Harpers Ferry NSFLTP grant is expected to be announced this month as well as the FY24 NOFO grant. If the project is not awarded, a new grant application will be submitted during the next round.
- Next week is the WVDOT/WVAMPO Planning Conference in Huntington. Staff has been active in chairing the Conference Committee.

### Staff Report

Ms. McDonough presented the following update:

- EPTA's GTFS is now live on Apple maps.
- Washington County's Apple updates continue.
- Plans are being made for an ADA workshop in Charles Town on June 25<sup>th</sup> at the Charles Washington Hall. Guests will include Ray Patrick, WVDOH ADA Coordinator; Jeff Robinette, FHWA; and Ron Eck, LTAP
- Staff is working to acquire new software for our TIP. A large amount of data has been stored on our current software, which staff is processing to provide to our new software provider.
- Staff is assisting Region 9 in preparing a TAP grant to aid Shepherdstown in providing additional sidewalks on the north side of South Princess Street; as well as other projects in the County.

Ms. Baker made a motion to close the regular meeting and move into Executive Session at 2:35 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Catlett, unanimously approved and so ordered by the Chairperson.

### **EXECUTIVE SESSION**

*To discuss the appointment, employment, assignment, promotion, discipline, demotion, compensation, removal, resignation, or performance evaluation of appointees, employees, or officials over whom this public body has jurisdiction; or any other personnel matter that affects one or more specific individuals.*

Ms. Baker made a motion to reconvene the regular meeting at 2:42 pm. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blake and so ordered by the Chairperson.

**Motion and Vote:** Commissioner Barr made a motion to approve a 3.5% pay increase for the Executive Director as budgeted. The motion was seconded by Mr. Catlett and unanimously approved.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **Interstate Council Member Recognition of Service**

The Interstate Council recognized Kevin Cerrone for his 18 years of service, including two years as the Interstate Council Chairman.

#### **Public Comment**

Chris Strovel of Senator Capito's office announced that appropriations will be announced in approximately three weeks.

Commissioner Barr announced that Governor Wes Moore met with the Washington County Board of County Commissioners and the County Administrator last week to discuss Interstate 81, school funding, highway user revenues, a new Court House, etc. Governor Moore assured the County Commissioners that I-81 will be completed; no details were forthcoming.

#### **Future Meetings**

The next scheduled meeting of the Interstate Council is Wednesday, August 21, 2024 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**

Ms. Baker made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 2:50 p.m. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blake and so ordered by the Chairperson.

Respectfully submitted,



Elaine Bartoldson, Chairperson