

**HAGERSTOWN/EASTERN PANHANDLE
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
INTERSTATE COUNCIL
October 15, 2025**

The Hagerstown/Eastern Panhandle Metropolitan Planning Organization Interstate Council held a meeting on Wednesday, October 15, 2025 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 Chairman called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m.

ROLL CALL

The following were in attendance: Elaine Bartoldson, Chairperson, EPTA Director; Jill Baker, Vice-Chairperson, Washington County Dept. of Planning & Zoning; Matt Mullenax, HEPMPO Executive Director; Brian Carr, WV DOH; Steve Catlett, Berkeley County Commission; Elizabeth Ricketts, City of Charles Town; Rachael Snively, Region IX; Shawn Kiernan, MDOT; Shawn Harbaugh, Washington County Transit; Andy Blake, City of Martinsburg; and Cara Keys, Jefferson County Commission.

Also present were: Michaela McDonough, HEPMPO; Sean Varsalona, MD SHA; Chris Strovel, Senator Capito's Office; Melanie Haake, Federal Transit Administration; and Jim Bender, City of Hagerstown Engineering.

For purposes of a quorum and voting, Ms. Mohn (Washington County Division of Engineering) assigned her proxy to Ms. Baker.

MINUTES

Motion and Vote: Mr. Catlett made a motion to approve the minutes of the August 20, 2025 meeting as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blake and unanimously approved.

-TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

FY 2025-2028 MD Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

Ms. McDonough presented the following amendments for the FY 2025-2028 MD TIP.

Maryland Department of Transportation (Formal action required)

- I-81 Ph 2 and 3 Highway Reconstruction, W2017-10
 - **Change:** Remove project from TIP. This project information will now be split and included in two new TIP projects (W2026-02 and W2026-03)

Motion and Vote: Ms. Ricketts made a motion to approve the TIP amendment for project W2017-10 as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Baker and unanimously approved.

- I-81 Interchange improvements at Showalter Avenue (I-81 Phase 4B, Maugansville), W2023-08
 - **Change:** Remove project from TIP. This project will now be included in the Areawide Bridge Replacement and Rehabilitation project (W2025-04).

Motion and Vote: Ms. Baker made a motion to approve the TIP amendment for project W2023-08 as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ricketts and unanimously approved.

- Areawide Congestion Management, W2025-06
 - **Change:** Move funding from CON phase to new “Other” project phase in the amount of \$1,000,000 in each FY2025, FY2026, FY2027 and FY2028.

Motion and Vote: Ms. Baker made a motion to approve the TIP amendment for project W2025-06 as presented. The motion was seconded by Ms. Ricketts and unanimously approved.

- I-81 Phases 2A and 2B Highway Reconstruction, W2026-02
 - **Project Data:** PE – Prior: \$8,235,000 (\$3,930,000 Federal; \$4,305,000 State), FY 2025: \$1,985,000 (\$1,983,000 Federal; \$2,000 State); FY 2026: \$2,000,000 (\$1,900,000 Federal; \$100,000 State); FY 2027: \$1,600,000 (\$1,520,000 Federal; \$80,000 State); FY 2028: \$600,000 (\$570,000 Federal; \$30,000 State); ROW – FY 2025: \$1,000 (Federal); FY 2027: \$691,000 (\$656,000 Federal; \$35,000 State); Future: \$36,000 (\$32,000 Federal; \$4,000 State). CON – FY 2026: \$376,000 (\$357,000 Federal; \$19,000 State); FY 2027: \$7,213,000 (\$6,852,000 Federal; \$361,000 State); FY 2028: \$32,480,000 (\$30,856,000 Federal; \$1,624,000 State); Future: \$86,820,000 (\$82,479,000 Federal; \$4,341,000 State)

Motion and Vote: Ms. Baker made a motion to approve the TIP amendment for project W2026-02 as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Blake and unanimously approved.

- I-81 Phase 3 Highway Reconstruction, W2026-03
 - **Project Data:** PP – Prior: \$3,530,000 (Federal)

Motion and Vote: Ms. Baker made a motion to approve the TIP amendment for project W2026-03 as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harbaugh and unanimously approved.

Ms. McDonough presented the following adjustments for the FY 2025-2028 MD TIP.

Maryland Department of Transportation (No formal action required)

- Areawide Safety and Spot Improvements, W2025-02
 - **Changes:** Increase FY2026 CON funding to \$12,000,000 (\$10,961,000 Federal; \$1,039,000 State)

Eastern Federal Lands

- Pavement Preservation, Burnside Bridge Trail and Sherrick Run Bridge, W2022-01
 - **Changes:** Project Obligated
- Repair three bridges, W2022-02
 - **Changes:** Project Obligated
- C&O Tunnel Rehabilitation, W2024-02
 - **Changes:** Project Obligated

Washington County Engineering

- Local Federal Aid Projects, W2019-07
 - **Changes:** Increase FY 2026 CON funding to \$15,790,200 (\$12,544,520 Federal; \$3,245,680 Local)

Mr. Mullenax stated that the public comment period for the proposed TIP amendments and adjustments ran from October 1st to October 14th; no comments were received.

Maryland Highway Safety Performance Measures

Mr. Mullenax reported that MDOT has finalized its highway safety performance measure targets for FY 2026. These targets are developed as part of the annual HSIP submission to FTA. MDOT provides a baseline and State targets for five safety performance measures that include the number of fatalities, fatality rate, number of serious injuries, serious injury rate, and the total number of non-motorized fatalities and injuries. Mr. Mullenax explained that as part of developing the safety performance targets once they are adopted, the MPOs have 180 days to either adopt the State's targets or adopt their own targets. MDOT and WVDOT provide a calculation based on approved methodology to show what part of the State targets are attributable to the MPO region. Since Washington County is the only county in Maryland within our MPO boundaries, the data shown is for Washington County only.

Mr. Mullenax presented a power point presentation of the data collected. He noted that the trend line shows a downward trend for the total number of fatal crashes and the bar graph shows a 5-year average of the number of fatal crashes. The 5-year average fatality rate, the average number of serious injuries, and the total number of non-motorized serious fatalities also decreased.

Ms. McDonough reviewed the targets that MDOT is proposing for FY 2026 as follows: number of fatalities – 485; number of serious injuries – 1,954; fatality rate – 0.81; serious injury rate – 3.24; and non-motorized fatalities and serious injuries – 570.2.

Motion and Vote: Ms. Baker made a motion to adopt the MD Highway Safety Performance Targets as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Harbaugh and unanimously approved.

LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN

Long Range Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Mullenax stated that the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee will be meeting later this month to begin its work of overseeing the development of the LRTP update. A draft plan is scheduled to be completed in March of 2027 at which time it will be presented to the Interstate Council for consideration of adoption. The first major round of public outreach is scheduled in the Spring of 2026. Staff will be meeting with the consultants next week to discuss the public facing project website that will provide information to the public over the next 18-month planning period.

US 11 Winchester Avenue Corridor Study

Mr. Mullenax noted that a site visit of several locations throughout the corridor occurred earlier in October and was hosted by the City of Martinsburg. The next step will be developing draft concepts of potential improvements based on historical data, existing plans (including the City's Gateway Vision Plan), proven safety countermeasures and observations from the site visit. The Winchester Avenue corridor was identified on the high injury networks of both the MPO's Regional Safety Action Plan and WVDOT's Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment. Mr. Mullenax presented a map showing the location and severity of crashes from 2020-2023 through the corridor as well as the crash rate and how it compares to the State average of a functionally similar class road – a minor urban arterial.

WV 9 Bicycle Path Connection Feasibility Study

Mr. Mullenax announced that our consultants have worked closely with the Town of Ranson to develop a map showing the proposed developments and various ideas for connecting the WV 9 Bike Path from Currie Road to downtown Ranson and Charles Town. A site visit was held earlier in October where several corridors and intersections were reviewed in terms of challenges and opportunities. This proposed connection was one of highest priorities in the MPO's Regional Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan.

Locust and Mulberry Streets Signal Evaluation Plan

Mr. Mullenax reported that our consultants are working with the City of Hagerstown to evaluate traffic signals on two corridors. They are currently working to validate traffic counts to compare and contrast with INRIX and Republica datasets. A draft report is anticipated in January.

-ORGANIZATIONAL ADMINISTRATION

Financial Status Update

Ms. Baker stated that the first quarter of the new fiscal year ended on September 30, 2025. No written report is available at this time; however, the MPO is on task and on budget. The majority of expenditures during the first quarter were in Special Studies and Administrative costs.

Director's Report

Mr. Mullenax gave a brief report on the following:

- Last Spring a safety assessment on the US Route 11 (Virginia Avenue) corridor was completed. MDOT has decided to further build on this work and has identified Virginia Avenue as a Vulnerable Road User Assessment Project. This is the first State led corridor effort in Western Maryland.
- A public meeting is tentatively scheduled on January 21, 2026 at the Eastern Elementary School for the US 40 Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP). This project covers the area from All Star Court to Garland Groh Boulevard. The project will utilize suballocated Carbon Reduction Program funds and will include the installation of pedestrian signals at five downtown intersections.
- The Bridge Investment Program (BIP) Planning Grant for the US 522 bridge in Hancock is currently on hold. FHWA is currently reviewing the program's Notice of Funding Opportunity.
- Staff along with the WVDOT attended a USDOT debrief on the Harpers Ferry BUILD grant that was not awarded this past summer. The application was rated "Recommended" and scored a "High" on four of the eight merit criteria required. In order for an application to advance to the second-tier analysis, it must receive a "Highly Recommended" rating and score "High" in at least six merit criteria.
- The MPO developed and submitted a \$1.3 million FLAP grant on behalf of the Corporation of Harpers Ferry for the High Street project.
- The Federal agreement has been completed and executed by the City of Martinsburg for the Martinsburg Greenway Trail BUILD grant. This agreement has been sent back to FHWA for its review.
- The initial grant agreement for the WCT Facilities Expansion BUILD grant has been drafted and reviewed for scoping. We are currently waiting on FTA to formally initiate the project.
- The foundation has been poured for EPTA's new Transit Center Administrative building and roof panels will be placed on the Maintenance and Bus Storage building very soon.
- The Winchester Avenue Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon project located at Winchester Avenue and Addition Street in Martinsburg has been identified in WVDOT's SAFE ROADS list. FHWA has indicated that it will be constructed in FY 2026. This project will be funded through the MPO's suballocated Carbon Reduction Program funding.
- The MDOT Tour was held last week in Hagerstown. Staff presented on a number of safety studies, grant activities and planning efforts. Acting Secretary Biddle acknowledged the MPO's work on securing grant awards and finding creative ways to fund projects.
- Two weeks ago, MPO staff along with Rachel Snively and Jennifer Wishmyer (Region IX) met with Secretary Rumbaugh and the WVDOT Management to discuss various

transportation items in the Eastern Panhandle. The State expressed concerns of funding for large capacity adding projects; however, as the new STIP is being developed they are looking to provide a more robust Return on Investment (ROI) component in their project selection process. This could benefit our region greatly. Mr. Mullenax invited Secretary Rumbaugh to visit the Eastern Panhandle to see first-hand our challenges and opportunities.

Staff Report

Ms. McDonough gave a brief report on the following:

- Staff is supporting Region IX with GIS services on regional connection projects.
- A presentation was made showcasing the MPO's future public comment process through the new TIP software.

OTHER BUSINESS

Public Comment

No public comment was received.

Future Meetings

The next scheduled meeting of the Interstate Council is Wednesday, January 21, 2026 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

The Chairman adjourned the meeting at 2:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,


Elaine Bartoldson, Chairperson

