

**MSOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES  
PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION**

**RURAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**April 24, 2024**

**10:00 AM**

**SAP&DC**

**Altoona, PA**

**ACTION SUMMARY**

The following are the major actions taken by the Rural Transportation Coordinating Committee (RTCC) at its regular meeting held on April 24, 2024, at the SAP&DC in Altoona, PA.

1. Approved the January 24, 2024, RTCC meeting minutes as presented.
2. Approved the Draft FY 2025 – 2028 Highway and Bridge TIP, the Draft FY 2025 – 2028 Public Transit TIP, the Memorandum of Understanding, and the Environmental Justice Analysis to be released for a 30-day public comment period from May 1 – 31, 2024.
3. Strongly recommended funding the two projects submitted to the PennDOT Multimodal Fund from the RPO region.

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**MEETING MINUTES**

**I. Welcome**

The following members were present at the meeting:

- Commissioner J. R. Winck, Bedford County
- Commissioner Jeff Thomas, Huntingdon County Commissioner
- Andrea Bahoric, PennDOT Central Office
- Vince Greenland, PennDOT District 9-0
- Steve Howsare, SAP&DC
- Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC

Others in attendance included:

- Frank Hampton, PennDOT Central Office
- Jim Pruss, PennDOT District 9-0
- Anne Stich, PennDOT District 9-0
- Jaclyn Himmelwright, PennDOT District 9-0
- Erin Weyant, Representative Jesse Topper's Office
- Lee Slusser, SAP&DC
- Emily Osilka, SAP&DC
- Janice Streightiff, SAP&DC

Each participant received a meeting packet that included:

- Agenda
- January 10, 2024 RTCC Meeting Minutes
- FY 2023 – 2026 SA RPO TIP Adjustments
- FY 2025 – 2028 TIP Highway & Bridge Fiscal Constraint Chart
- SA RPO Highway & Bridge Narrative TIP
- SA RPO Transit Narrative TIP
- MOU
- Environmental Justice Maps
- Greenhouse Gas Target Letter

## **II. Review and Approval of the January 24, 2024 RTCC Meeting Minutes**

Vince Greenland called the meeting to order, and Matthew Bjorkman conducted roll call. He asked everyone to introduce themselves and congratulated Jim Pruss on his promotion to Assistant District Executive for Design at PennDOT District 9-0. He asked the committee to review the January 24, 2024, RTCC meeting minutes included in the meeting packet.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Jeff Thomas made a motion to approve the January 24, 2024, RTCC meeting minutes as presented. Commissioner J. R. Winck seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

## **III. FY 2023 – 2026 TIP Modifications and Amendments**

Anne Stich noted that the adjustments provided today are the modifications completed on the FY 2023 – 2026 TIP since the last meeting. None of these require approval. If anyone has any questions, please contact her and she will be happy to answer them.

## **IV. FY 2025 – 2028 Draft TIP**

Matthew Bjorkman informed the committee that there are four portions of the FY 2025 – 2028 Draft TIP to be approved for public comment today. If approved, the public comment period will be May 1, 2024, through May 31, 2024. The TIP is composed of three main parts, highway and bridge, public transit, and interstate. The FY 2025 – 2028 Draft TIP does not include an interstate TIP. The FY 2025 – 2028 Draft TIP narratives for the highway and bridge, and public transit portions are included in the meeting packet.

Commissioner Jeff Thomas voiced his concerns with the New Fording Bridge in Todd Township listed on page 35 of the FY 2025 – 2028 Draft Highway and Bridge TIP narrative. The project is listed as a bridge improvement project. The County supports the replacement of the bridge. The cost would be about the same and the historical bridge could be moved to the East Broad Top Railroad where it would be used as a walking bridge. The location it would be moved to would also be historic and is located ten miles from its current location. The East Broad Top Railroad will take ownership of the bridge if it is moved. Huntingdon County strongly supports the replacement and moving of the bridge.

Matthew reviewed the Memorandum of Understand (MOU) with the committee, which outlines the requirements of what actions need approval. Currently, the limit for administrative actions is set at \$2M. Over \$2M requires approval by this committee. This threshold is consistent with other planning regions and the State. The RPO can lower this threshold or keep it the same. This is for federal funds. The committee agreed to recommend keeping the \$2M threshold.

Once the Draft FY 2025 – 2028 TIP is approved by the committee, it goes to Steve Howsare and Kristin Mulkerin, the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation Deputy Secretary for Planning, for signatures.

Matthew reviewed the Environmental Justice maps included in the packet, noting that they have been distributed to the planning organizations in the RPO region. The maps are based on the minority and poverty thresholds. Staff are required to do a benefits and burdens analysis. There was an increase in environmental justice communities this TIP round due to the lowering of the regional thresholds for low income from 12% to 10%. Of the 149 municipalities in the RPO, 100 qualified as environmental justice communities.

With no further discussion, Commissioner Jeff Thomas made a motion to approve the Draft FY 2025 – 2028 Highway and Bridge TIP, the Draft FY 2025 – 2028 Public Transit TIP, the Memorandum of Understanding, and the Environmental Justice Analysis to be released for a 30-day public comment period from May 1 – 31, 2024. Commissioner J. R. Winck seconded the motion the motion was approved unanimously.

Vince thanked everyone for their hard work.

## **V. FY 2027 – 2030 TIP**

Matthew informed the committee that as we wrap up the FY 2025 – 2028 TIP, the RPO is already looking forward to the FY 2027 – 2030 TIP. Typically, the counties send forms out to their municipalities for them to submit projects. For the last TIP, SAP&DC staff made an online submission form for this as well to try and increase responses and make record keeping and sharing information easier. This was promoted at the County Township Officials Conventions as well as the PennDOT outreach meetings. The RPO plans to do that again for this TIP. Staff have modified the survey for the 2027 outreach and will share it with the counties with a QR code to access the survey. Due to the nature of the region, 100% digital is not recommended. Staff will review and share the submissions with the appropriate county. Paper forms can be entered in the system when received. Commissioner J. R. Winck recommended taking a computer or tablet along to the conventions so that the survey could be filled out on the spot. The QR code could also be scanned so they could fill it out on their phones.

## **VI. Greenhouse Gas Target Settings**

The RPO received a letter from PennDOT asking the RPO to approve/disapprove the statewide Greenhouse Gas target settings. The RPO received a second letter last week requesting this be put on hold as FHWA's authority to set these targets is being challenged in court.

Commissioner J. R. Winck asked how this affects agriculture. PennDOT responded that this is focused on emissions from the highway system, but staff can look into that.

## **VII. PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund Comments**

Vince noted that both PennDOT District 9 and the RPO submit comments for the PennDOT Multimodal Transportation Fund applications submitted in the region. PennDOT has already submitted their comments. Matthew noted that for the RPO review if the project is eligible and worthwhile the projects are strongly recommended for approval. Matt reviewed the two projects with the committee answering any questions they had. If anyone would like to review the applications, he can send them out following the meeting.

There was some discussion about the Moore Street and Cold Spring Road Reconfiguration and Connectivity project in Huntingdon Borough. The project is the realignment of Cold Spring Road as well as the addition of a stop sign to avoid vehicles hitting the buildings on the other side. One institutional building has been hit more than once. PennDOT has made some adjustments on this road for sight and slope, but the turn is still an issue. The project includes a stop sign, cross walk and ADA compliant sidewalks. Vince believes that on the previous application they did not own the other side of the road, there were historic issues, and there were some utility issues moving poles. Realignment was the main focus of the previous project. As an action item, PennDOT will research this project.

Matthew then asked the committee to vote on the approval to recommend the projects to PennDOT for funding.

With no further discussion, Steve Howsare made a motion that the RPO strongly recommends funding the two projects submitted to the PennDOT Multimodal Fund from the RPO region. Commissioner J. R. Winck seconded the motion. PennDOT abstained. All other members in attendance voted to approve. The motion was carried.

## **VIII. Bicycle & Pedestrian Plan Candidate Project Listing**

Zachary Lee gave some background information on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan noting that the plan was updated in 2021. As part of that update, the appendix for projects in the region was changed by introducing the candidate project list as an appendix to that plan. The listing has four categories: initial, early development, advanced development, and ongoing maintenance. The intent is to gather projects from around the RPO, place them in one of the categories listed, and then work with them to move their project up in the listing and help them apply for funding for their project. There are currently ten projects on the listing. Staff plans to solicit for additional projects in June or July. At the last Planning Advisory Committee (PAC) meeting, Lindsay Baer from DCNR recommended the same type of listing be added to the Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Plan during the upcoming update. When applying for funding, if a project is listed on three plans it gets top points for the application. Matthew agreed to send out the project listing to the committee members following the meeting. Staff looks for additional projects every 8 – 12 months. Huntingdon County's added a Bicycle & Pedestrian plan with a project listing to

its County Comprehensive Plan and this will count as a third listing for a DCNR grant application. Additional consideration is also given to projects that connect trails or hubs.

There was also some discussion about ATV trails. DCNR is currently leading a pilot program in the northern part of the state for this. The pilot links off road trails and does not use any state roads. The program has a lot of public interest.

## **IX. Other Business**

### Southern Alleghenies Mini-Grants

Matthew informed the committee that SAP&DC applied to DCNR for funding for the Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Mini-Grant Program. Round 10 of the program is now open. SAP&DC received \$150,000 for this round and projects can range from \$3,000 to \$30,000. He gave some examples of qualifying projects. The deadline for applications is May 31<sup>st</sup>. Grant guidelines and instructions on how to apply can be found on the SAP&DC website. Awards are expected to be announced in August. To date over \$1M has been awarded to fund 50 – 60 projects. He recommended the counties tell anyone they think might be interested about the program. Matthew will send information on the program to the counties following the meeting.

### Other Business

Matthew received notice that we should receive the decisions on the TA Set Aside funding by the end of this week or early next week. The RPO ranked in the projects at the November meeting and it will be interesting to see how our top ranked projects did. He reviewed the process with the new committee members.

Steve added that Debbie Prosser, the current Director of Business Development, is retiring at the end of June. Zack Lee has been promoted to the position effective July 1, 2024. This is also Emily Osilka's last day as she has accepted a position with PennDOT District 8.

Jeff Thomas requested that SAP&DC not schedule meetings the day after an election as the commissioners work late that day. It makes it very difficult for them to attend.

## **X. Adjournment**

Commissioner J. R. Winck made a motion to adjourn at 11:22 AM.

<p><b><u>NOTE:</u></b> The next meeting of the RTCC is scheduled for June 26, 2024, at the SAP&amp;DC beginning at 10:00 AM.</p>
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**SOUTHERN ALLEGHENIES  
 PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION  
 RURAL TRANSPORTATION COORDINATING COMMITTEE  
 April 24, 2024**

**ACTION ITEMS**

<b>Action Items</b>	<b>By Whom</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
Share the modified survey with a QR code for the 2027 outreach with the counties.	Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC	No date given
Research how greenhouse gas affects agriculture.	Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC	No date given
Research the history of the Moore Street and Cold Spring Road Reconfiguration and Connectivity project in Huntingdon Borough.	PennDOT District 9	No date given
Send out the Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan candidate project listing to the committee members.	Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC	Following the meeting
Send information on the Southern Alleghenies Regional Greenways Mini-Grant Program to the counties.	Matthew Bjorkman, SAP&DC	Following the meeting