



MINUTES

MPO Transportation Technical Committee Meeting

MMMPO Conference Room 243 High St. Room 110, Morgantown, WV

March 10, 2019, 1:30 PM

Members Present

Bill Austin, Andrew Gast-Bray, Chris Fletcher, Damien Davis, Latina Mayle

Others Present

John Whitmore, Drew Gatlin, Jessica Shuey, Jing Zhang

1. Call to Order

With a quorum present, Mr. Austin called the meeting of the TTAC to order at 1:30 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Austin noted that the minutes of the last meeting were included in the agenda packet. Mr. Gast-Bray moved to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Mr. Davis. With no discussion, the motion was approved.

3. Introduction of New Employee

Mr. Austin introduced Jessica Shuey as the MPO's new employee. Mr. Austin noted that Ms. Shuey's primary duty is public involvement, including website maintenance and preparing newsletter for the MPO. It is a shared position with the Monongalia county. TTAC members introduced themselves and welcomed Ms. Shuey.

4. Draft TIP

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO needs to adopt a new TIP at the March meeting to be fully coordinated with the newly adopted State Transportation Improvement Program. A copy of the draft TIP was included in the agenda package. The revised TIP does not reflect significant changes to the existing projects, except that several completed projects were removed from the tables. The MPO made the revised TIP table available to the public in mid-January to meet the requirements of the MPO's Public Involvement Policy. To date the draft TIP has received no public comments.

Mr. Austin noted that the TIP includes two tables listing the same projects. The first table sorts the projects by names; the second table sorts the projects by the date that they were included in the TIP and the date (if any) funds have been obligated to projects.

Mr. Gast-Bray noted that it will be helpful to identify the contribution of TIP projects to MPO's performance measures. Mr. Austin noted that it would be difficult for the MPO to quantify and track the contribution of each TIP project to MTP performance measures, as the MPO does not have direct control over the programming of the TIP projects. Mr. Fletcher suggested adding MTO priority information to the project tables. He noted that it will help the public to better understand the relation between the two documents. Mr. Austin agreed and noted that many TIP projects are not developed from the MTP and hence do not have MTP priority information. However, adding the information to the table will help the public to track the implementation of MTP projects which are in the TIP.

Mr. Fletcher moved to recommend approval of the revised TIP to the Policy Board with the recommendation. Seconded by Mr. Gast-bray. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

5. Draft Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Austin noted that the draft FY 2020-2021 Unified Planning Work Program was enclosed in the agenda package. The primary new initiative in the UPWP is the beginning of the update of the Metropolitan Transportation Plan to reflect an updated regional travel demand model, a new effort to identify the community's goals and objectives and to incorporate the results of the ongoing transit study and the recently adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan into the Highway element of the MTP. The UPWP includes a 2% increase in MPO staff salary to keep up with the cost of living.

Mr. Fletcher moved to recommend approval of the UPWP to the Policy Board with the recommendation. Seconded by Mr. Gast-Bray. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

6. Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan Amendment

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO Policy Board adopted Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan in November. As the Board had concerns about some projects in the Plan, the MPO's consultants hold a session for the Board to review projects and to develop an implementation guideline. The guideline sets the priority for the policy board in implementing the bicycle and pedestrian plan.

Mr. Fletcher noted that the negative score in the safety evaluation table could mislead the public on the safety of on-street bicycle facilities. He noted that the plan was thoroughly developed by planning professionals with extensive input from the community. Negative safety scores for on-street bicycle facilities could incorrectly imply that those bicycle facilities are not safety.

Mr. Austin noted that implementation guideline reflects the preference of the boards in funding the identified projects of the plan. It is not a ranking scheme from the perspective of planners and engineers. Mr. Austin suggested that the “safety priority” be replaced by “corridor improvement initiatives” to avoid potential misleading implications. The committee agreed.

Mr. Gast-Bray moved to recommend approval of the UPWP to the Policy Board with the recommendation. Seconded by Mr. Fletcher. With no discussion, the motion unanimously passed.

7. 2019 Traffic Count Report

Mr. Austin noted that a copy of the MPO’s most recent traffic count report was enclosed in the agenda package. Mr. Austin noted that the report includes directional volumes, peak period factors, and percent change in traffic for the one year and three-year time periods.

It has been noted that the traffic volume at many stations have decreased over the past three years. Major causes include the opening of new interchanges on I-79, the changes of WVU class schedule and locations, and the development in the Westridge and Mylan Park areas. Mr. Gatlin noted that the MPO could collaborate with the City in traffic count to optimize limited resources. Mr. Austin agreed and noted that the MPO is able to provide raw traffic data collected using WVDOH’s methodology.

8. Update on Mountain Line Transit Study

Mr. Austin noted that the study consultant has held the first session of public involvement. Public meetings were held at the Mountaineer Station and the Evansdale Crossing. A large number of WVU students participated in the events. Mr. Austin noted that survey results showed that transit users are satisfied with the exiting service, while they also made suggestions to increase transit services in the area.

Mr. Gatlin noted that he went to the public meeting at the Evansdale Crossing and found that some consultants only stayed for a short period of time and left the meeting. Mr. Austin noted that he will pass this comment to Mountain Line for inquiry.

9. Other Business

Mr. Fletcher asked about the status of the intersection improvement project at WV 7 and Greenbag Rd in Sabraton. Mr. Austin noted that the WV District Office is waiting on coordination with Mon Power to start construction.

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO will set up a kick-off meeting to coordinate with the County and municipalities in preparing the update for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan. He noted that integrating the planning process of the MTP and the comprehensive plans will provide more effective public involvement for all.

10. Meeting Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 2:15 PM