



TRANSPORTATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY MEETING

January 10, 2023

This meeting was held virtually at
<https://morgantownmonongaliampo.my.webex.com/meet/baustin>

Members Present:

Bill Austin (Chair), Maria Smith, Andrew Gast-Bray, Damien Davis, Michael Dougherty, Brian Carr

Others Present: Jing Zhang

1. Call to Order

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the TTAC meeting was held virtually. The phone number and web address to access the teleconference were publicized.

With a quorum present, Mr. Austin called the meeting of the TTAC to order at 1:00 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Austin noted that the minutes of the last meeting were included in the agenda package. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO staff had made a correction on the minutes based on a comment from Mrs. Smith. Mrs. Smith moved to approve the meeting minutes as presented; seconded by Mr. Gast-Bray; with no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Draft On-Call Consultant RFQ

Mr. Austin noted that the draft on call consultant RFQ is included in the agenda package. Mr. Austin noted that some interested parties expressed concerns with the structure of the previously released RFQ. MPO staff decided to end that solicitation and reopen the RFQ with modifications. The modified RFQ separates the cost element from the requirement of the RFQ and provides that MPO Staff can only review the cost information under consideration after the firm or firms are selected as on call consultants.

Maria Smith asked if hourly rates will be considered in the selection process. Mr. Austin noted that the hourly rate factor will be considered in the contract stage after the firm is selected. If negotiation fails, the MPO can select other firms down the line.

Mr. Carr noted that in order to get reimbursement from the State on consulting expenses, the candidates should use an approved overhead rate from the state. Mr. Carr noted that he will send the MPO a sample clause used in a similar RFQ from another MPO.

Mr. Dougherty moved to recommend approval of the RFQ to the MPO's Policy Board with the modification suggested by Mr. Carr; seconded by Mr. Davis. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Draft Downtown Micro-Simulation Study RFQ

Mr. Austin noted that the Downtown Traffic Simulation Study RFQ was included in the agenda packet. Mr. Austin note that the study will address numerous recommendations from the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, including potentially closing Grumbein's Island, upgrading and/or relocating Willey Street, improving University Avenue, and evaluating the one-way street pairs in downtown. Other issues the Study can assist in addressing include pedestrian safety and parking.

Mr. Austin noted that in working with WVDOH, the MPO has identified that the Downtown Traffic Simulation Study will be funded utilizing a portion of the MPO's designated Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. The WV DOH will be the lead agency in contracting the study and the MPO will be managing its development.

Mr. Carr noted that the WV DOH has prequalified a number of consulting firms for transportation projects and studies. The WV DOH will inform the short-listed firms about the study and select a consultant from them. The RFQ will be used as the basis for the scope of work in negotiating with the consultant.

Mr. Davis suggested that the Campus Ave and University Ave intersection be included in the key intersection list in the study.

Mr. Austin noted the study will also consider the impact of recently completed Beechurst Ave Spot Improvement project.

Mr. Dougherty noted that data collection should be done when school is in session.

Mr. Austin agreed and noted that the consultant is expected to use innovative ways to collect data cost-effectively.

Mr. Gast-Bray moved to recommend approval of the RFQ to the MPO's Policy Board; seconded by Mr. Carr. With no further discussion, the mission passed unanimously.

5. Draft FY 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Austin noted that the draft 2023 Unified Planning Work Program was enclosed in the agenda package. The UPWP includes oversight of the Downtown Traffic Study, oversight of the Greenbag Road Design Study, initial implementation of the pedestrian/cyclist data collection initiative, and normal MPO operations including enhanced outreach. MPO Staff also intends to perform an areawide charging station study. The draft UPWP proposes a 4% cost of living increase for primary MPO Staff along with enhanced pay for the MPO's shared employee upon completion of their probationary period.

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO's new employee will work part time until May when she will become a full-time employee. The position is shared with the Monongalia County Planning Commission.

Mr. Austin noted that there the MPO is expecting additional funding from the federal government as an outcome of the recently passed infrastructure bill. The amount of funding will be based on the MPO's population changes.

This item requires no action from the committee at this meeting.

6. Other Business

Mr. Austin noted that the WV DOH has no TIP amendment requests for this month as they are waiting for the approval of the State Transportation Improvement Program from FHWA.

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO was in contact with the WV Secretary of Transportation and confirmed the funding for three projects in the region; they are the Greenbag Rd Design project, the Downtown Traffic Simulation Study, and the intersection improvement at the Don Knotts Blvd and Smithtown Rd. Carbon reduction suballocation funds will be used for the Don Knotts Blvd/Smithtown Rd intersection.

Mr. Davis noted that the City of Morgantown has re-started the bidding process for the Pleasant Street Streetscape project. The cost from the previous bid was higher than originally estimated. The City is looking for additional funds from DOH for this project. It is expected the construction of the project will start this spring.

Mr. Austin noted that the DOH has cancelled the construction phase of the roundabout project at the University Ave and Collins Ferry Rd due to the prolonged right-of-way phase. The DOH still has the funding for this project and will re-bid the project.

10. Meeting Adjournment

The Meeting adjourned at 1:58 PM