



MMMPO 2023 Spring Newsletter

2023 MPO COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

Next MPO Policy Board

Thursday, May 18, 2023

Time: 6 PM, EST

Next Citizens Advisory Committee

Thursday, May 11, 2023

Time: 6 PM, EST

Next Technical Advisory Committee

Tuesday, May 9, 2023

Time: 1 PM, EST

Policy Advisory Committee

Meets Monthly as

Morgantown Area Partnership

Transportation Committee

How to attend

The MPO Policy Board meets at the Monongalia County Board of Education and the meeting is broadcasted on our YouTube channel.

Meetings of the Citizens Advisory Committee and the Technical Advisory Committee are held at the MPO's conference room at 243 High Street, Morgantown. The meetings are accessible virtually on: morgantownmonongaliampo.my.webex.com/meet/baustin

ONGOING PROJECTS UPDATES

- *Downtown Micro-Simulation Study*- Funds for this Study will become available next Fiscal Year (7/1/23). The MMMPO is in the process of selecting consultants to perform this study.
- *Greenbag Road Design Study*- The MMMPO is in the process of finalizing a contract for WVDOH to utilize the MPO's RAISE Grant for this study.
- *Don Knotts Blvd/Smithtown Rd Improvement Project*- The project has been funded for Design. ROW and Construction-WVDOH will need to advertise for a consultant to prepare the Design and after that for a firm to construct the improvement.
- *Beechurst Avenue Project*- This project is planned to begin soon. It will include the relocation of the Campus Drive intersection with Beechurst Avenue. We will provide more information on the construction as we receive it.
- The installation of a pedestrian crossing at Laurel Street and Patteson Drive will also begin shortly. We will provide more information on this construction as we receive it.

MPO STAFF UPDATE: JACKIE PEATE JOINS AS PLANNER I

In January, Jackie joined the MMMPO and MCPC staff as a Planner I. She is currently part time, as she is finishing her Masters program at the University of Pittsburgh Graduate School of Public and International Affairs. She will transition to full time once she graduates in late April.

PARTNER AGENCY UPDATE: **MOUNTAIN LINE TRANSIT AUTHORITY (MLTA)**



Mountain Line is a publicly supported and funded transportation system serving Monongalia County. Maria Smith from Mountain Line has provided the MMMPO with this agency update:

- New buses are arriving! The Authority received the last of seven new Ford cutaways in February and the first of 8 new Gilligs arrived as well. These 15 new buses are long past as delivery was delayed by the chips and parts shortage caused by the COVID pandemic.
- The Board of Directors is expected to take action during the March Board Meeting on the proposed construction bid for renovation of the customer lobby and buildout of the unfinished space in the administrative wing.
- Construction is tentatively scheduled to be completed midyear 2023.
- The new buildout and proposed construction will include:
 - A new Customer Service Center and a lobby that includes a passenger video feed of the Pifer Terminal area, allowing passengers to see bus arrivals from the lobby. The new design also features two private restrooms for drivers, a play area for children, charging stations integrated into the lobby seating and acoustic features to reduce the amount of noise in the lobby.
 - Offices for the Human Resources Officer, the Mobility Coordinator, the Training Officer and the new IT position. Additionally, a two story storage area will be included.

PARTNER AGENCY UPDATE: **WEST VIRGINIA UNIVERSITY**



- Gov. Justice awards \$9.7 million in Transportation Alternatives and Recreational Trails Program grants across West Virginia.
 - WVU was awarded \$1,250,000.00 for construction on the West Virginia University Campus Connector Path.

PARTNER AGENCY UPDATE: **MON RIVER TRAILS CONSERVANCY**

Ella Belling has provided the MMMPO with this agency update:

- Gov. Justice awards \$9.7 million in Transportation Alternatives and Recreational Trails Program grants across West Virginia.
- Mon River Trails Conservancy was awarded:
 - \$220,000 for construction to repave the Caperton Rail-Trail in Star City.
 - \$260,000 for construction to help repair the Caperton Rail Trail Arboretum Section Trail.
- These projects each require a 20% cash match. The amounts listed are for total costs.
- Work on the Collins Ferry Connector has begun again after a winter break. This section is CLOSED for trail use. The rail-trails remain open for use, closure is only on the connector.



PARTNER AGENCY UPDATE: **CITY OF MORGANTOWN & PEDESTRIAN SAFETY BOARD**



The city of Morgantown has provided the MMMPO with this agency update:

- The City will complete their 5-year paving plan this year and recently announced the beginning of an update to the 2017 paving assessment to establish another capital plan. Their pavement preservation activities have grown to become the largest non-state sponsored paving project in the region, annually treating around 10% of the entire roadway network.
- The City had two successful TAP/RTP applications this year. They received an additional \$300K for the Walnut Street Streetscape, supporting that project's nearly \$1.5M budget. They also won an initial \$508K to construct the Municipal Airport Streetscape Project.
- Morgantown's Traffic Commission filled its voting members for the first time in 10 years. The Commission continues to examine its purpose and mission and is expected to pass new bylaws in April 2023. Earlier this year, they allowed the Pedestrian Safety Board to begin managing its own membership and procedural changes.
- Several planning efforts undertaken over the past 15 years have supported the City's 2007 Complete Streets Resolution. Morgantown now appears to be moving into a new, more action-oriented phase with recent announcements:
 - Council and Administration committed \$1 million in ARPA disbursements towards the first year of their newly announced "Pedestrian Protection Plan". They will use the funds in several ways – first, to transform the MMMPO's 2020 Regional Bike/Ped Plan analysis and recommendations into a City-specific implementation plan, secondly, to design several initial projects, and thirdly, to provide a deep dive into financing and funding strategies for future years.
 - The City continues to utilize its "paper streets" – rights-of-way either abandoned or never built – as novel opportunities for low-stress bicycle and pedestrian routes.
 - They recently allocated \$250K to reopen, stabilize, and upgrade the old road under the Walnut Street Bridge, transforming it into an accessible trail connection between downtown at the intersection of Spruce & Kirk Street and the Decker's Creek Rail-Trail at the Greenmont Pedestrian Bridge.
 - Three other paper street projects have already been identified and two should be constructed this year - both in direct support of Safe Routes to School. These include a partial bypass of Dorsey Avenue using a connection behind Avalon Street and Parkway Drive and another of Collins Ferry Road using a connection between Eastern Avenue and Flagel Street.

The Morgantown Pedestrian Safety Board provided the MMMPO with this:

- Laurie Abildso represents the First Ward and has been elected Vice Chairperson for the 2023 year.
- Thanks to Beau Evans, Traffic Safety Director in Huntington for forming a Ped/Bike Safety Board.



ABOUT THE MMMPO

The Morgantown Monongalia Metropolitan Planning Organization (MMMPO) was established in 2003 to be the transportation planning agency responsible for the Morgantown, West Virginia urban area. Any urban area with a population that is greater than 50,000 citizens is federally required to form a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The two main functions of an MPO are developing a Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and ensure that the use of federal funds for transportation projects aligns with the goals of the MTP.

Policy Board Officers:

Michael Kelly
Board Chairman

Joe Statler
Board Vice-Chairman

Mayor Patricia Lewis
Board Treasurer

Bill Austin
Secretary, Executive Director

Policy Board Members:

Monongalia County Commission:

Jefferey Arnett

Tom Bloom

Sean Sikora

City of Morgantown City Council:

Jenny Selin

Bill Kawecki

Dave Harshbarger

West Virginia University- Ron Justice, Chairman

Monongalia County Board of Education- Michael Kelly, Vice-Chairman

Town of Granville- Mayor Patricia Lewis, Treasurer

Star City- Steve Blinco, Recorder

City of Westover City Council- Steve Solomon

Blacksville- Joe Statler

Mountain Line Transit Authority- Dave Bruffy

West Virginia Department of Transportation-Division of Highways- Brian Carr

In accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the MMMPO strives to provide equal access to all members of the public at our public meetings and hearings. If you require mobility assistance, sign language interpretation, or interpretation in a foreign language, please contact us at least 4 business days prior to the scheduled meeting or hearing. Our contact information is as follows:

Jing Zhang/Jackie Peate

planning@plantogether.org

304-291-9671

The MMMPO is committed to ensuring that everyone has the opportunity to participate and be heard at our public meetings and hearings.

Our Partners

