



82 Hart Field Road Suite 105
Morgantown WV, 26505
www.plantgether.org

MINUTES

MPO Transportation Technical Advisory Committee
MMMPO Conference Room
243 High St. Room 110, Morgantown, WV
June 6, 2017, 1:30 PM

Members Present

Bill Austin, Bob Edwards, Scott Wright, Fouad Shoukry, Brian Carr, Don Williams, Dave Bruffy, Rich Wood, Chris Fletcher

Others Present

John Whitmore-City of Morgantown, Jing Zhang-MMMPO

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 the Minutes

Mr. Austin noted that the minutes of the July meeting were included in the agenda packet. Mr. Bruffy moved to approve the minutes as corrected, seconded by Mr. Wood. With no discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

3. Designation of Proposed Freight Routes

Mr. Austin noted that in response to the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act passed by Congress last year, the FHWA has been developing a National Highway Freight Network (NHFN). The purpose of this freight network is to qualify freight corridors for additional funding under programs in the FAST Act. The WV DOH is developing the WV State Freight network as part of the NHFN and asks the MPO to identify local freight network routes. Staff has reviewed the criteria for the designation of these network and previous public comments and is proposing to add WV 43, CR 857 and WV 7 as Critical Urban Freight Corridors, totaling approximately 9 miles in the Morgantown urban area. The routes are shown in a map included in the agenda package. Mr. Austin noted that freight Advisory Committee will review this proposal before it is presented to the Policy Board.

Mr. Davis noted that providing an alternative freight route on Greenbag Rd could help to reduce freight traffic volume in the downtown area. Mr. Davis moved to recommend approval of the proposed freight network to the Policy Board. With no discussion, the motion was unanimously approved.

4. Proposed TIP Process and Meeting Schedule Changes

Mr. Austin noted that WVDOH has been working with the West Virginia MPO Association to develop a process to expedite the approval of non-controversial and routine projects. These projects can include items such as bridge inspections, emergency repairs, and similar issues. The Association has come to a preliminary agreement for this process, known as “groupable projects.” Under this process the DOH would approve projects in certain categories such as bridge inspections, and then notify the MPO to add them to the TIP and to announce the addition of these projects at the next Policy Board meeting.

Mr. Austin the noted that the MPO Association and MMMPO Staff have been in agreement with this process for most items except there has been concern about the Transportation Alternatives and the pavement management programs. MPO Staff and Policy Board members receive the most public inquiry to projects in these categories. The MPO Association and WVDOH have worked out an agreement on these projects whereby MPOs would provide input into the Transportation Alternatives Program and the maintenance program at the beginning of the project selection process for these and the other programs to be included in “groupable projects” is included in the agenda packet.

The MPO staff recommend to authorize the Executive Director and the Policy Board Chairman to approve the “groupable projects” procedure for use in the TIP upon receiving the final written agreement.

Mr. Bruffy noted that whether a project is high profile may be perceived differently by DOH and by local community and many maintenance or paving projects which may be considered low profile could provide great opportunities for pedestrian and bicycle facility improvements, which could result in considerable impact to local neighborhood. He agreed that the final agreement should provide a clear definition for the project of significant impact. Mr. Fletcher also agreed. He then noted that it is inappropriate to put bike and pedestrian projects under the groupable project category. Bicycle and pedestrian projects are often locally initiated and developed. Local input is essential to the success of those projects.

Mr. Carr noted that the work scope of maintenance projects are usually difficult to change once it is decided due to financial constraints and administrative procedures. He then noted that the proposed TIP process encourages the involvement of MPO in the early project selection process. Mr. Williams noted that there is no designated funds for sidewalks and because of that, many sidewalk projects have to compete with other paving projects under limited resources. In some circumstances, the cost of a sidewalk project is disproportionately higher than the cost of a paving project serving even a large population.

Mr. Austin noted that the proposed TIP process will enable the MPO to provide input on paving project during the project selection stage. It will help to coordinate the MPO’s priorities and the DOH’s paving schedules and the DOH staff could be informed in advance about the concerns of local communities.

Mr. Fletcher made a motion to establish a subcommittee of the policy board to approve the “groupable projects” procedure for use in the TIP, providing that pedestrian and bicycle projects are not be categorized as groupable projects, and that the definition of regional significant project is cleared specified. The motion was seconded by Mr. Davis. With no further, the motion was approved. Mr. Carr voted against this motion.

5. Interim Traffic Count Report

Mr. Austin noted that MPO's interim traffic count report for this year are enclosed in the agenda package. Several locations will be recounted to verify their accuracy. The final traffic count report will be prepared after the completion of the annual count program this fall. No action is required on this item.

6. Beechurst Avenue Study Status Report

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO will hold the Steering Committee meeting for this study afternoon. Currently, the study team has completed data collection and developed a base model. The Steering Committee will look at several preliminary alternatives. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO has adjusted the schedule of the study is moving forward with a few weeks behind the original schedule.

7. Update on Performance Measure Requirements

Mr. Austin noted that MPO staff is working with the state, Mountain Line Transit, and WVU to develop performance measure for PRT and Transit programs. He noted that he went to a training provided by FHWA in Raleigh. Managing performance measure will be one of the major tasks of the MPO.

8. Ongoing Project Update

Mr. Austin asked about the status of Van Voorhis repaving project. Mr. Carr noted that the project is under contract, and is expected to be completed very soon.

9. Meeting Adjournment.

The meeting adjourned at 2:20 PM.