



## SEDA-COG METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO) MEETING

Friday, April 17, 2020

SEDA-COG

Lewisburg, PA

9:30 A.M.

### **MPO VOTING MEMBERS (via teleconference)**

Mark Colussy, Mifflin County  
Katie de Silva, Clinton County  
Lisa Dooley, Town of Bloomsburg  
Brad Kerstetter, Juniata County  
Shawn McLaughlin, Union County  
Greg Molter, Montour County  
Carey Mullins, PennDOT Central Office  
Steve Phillips, SEDA-COG Board, Multi-Modal Interests  
Jonathan Ranck, PennDOT District 3-0  
Richard Ridgway, SEDA-COG Board At-Large Member  
Vickie Rusnak, PennDOT District 2-0  
Jim Saylor, SEDA-COG  
Justin Skavery, Northumberland County  
Eric Stahley, Columbia County

### **OTHER MPO MEMBERS**

Jamie Lemon, FHWA  
Anne Messner, Centre County MPO  
Kristin Mulkerin, PennDOT Central Office

### **GUESTS**

Eileen Evert, Geisinger Health Plan  
Emily Gregorowicz, Geisinger  
John Levitsky, PennDOT Bureau of Public Transportation  
Beth Nidam, rabbittransit  
Steve Wilver, Larson Design Group  
Shannon Wood, Geisinger Health Plan  
Tom Zilla, Centre County MPO

### **STAFF PRESENT**

Kay Aikey, Program Assistant  
Steve Herman, Transportation Planner  
Don Kiel, Senior Principal Program Analyst  
Katherine Lewis, Program Analyst, GIS  
Kyle Postupack, Property and Maintenance of Way Manager  
Jeff Stover, Transportation Program Chief

## **Call to Order**

Mr. Saylor called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. Roll call was taken of MPO voting members, other MPO members, guests and staff.

Mr. Saylor noted that in addition to the meeting being recorded by Ms. Aikey, it is also being recorded using the Ring Central platform since the meeting is being done in a teleconference call format. This will help with the minutes, and with best practices it has been recommended to post the meeting recording after the fact. Staff will reach out to members regarding the idea of posting the recording before any action is taken on the minutes to make sure members are comfortable with that.

## **Public Forum**

No comments were received from the general public.

## **Approval of the February 14, 2020 Meeting Minutes of the SEDA-COG MPO**

***Mr. Colussy made a motion to approve the minutes from the February 14, 2020, MPO meeting; Mr. Mullins seconded the motion; motion carried.***

## **TIP Administrative Modifications and Amendments**

Mr. Saylor provided a brief summary of PennDOT's operations under the mitigation measures. He stated that work on most PennDOT projects has been suspended. There is a list of 61 emergency projects that will continue and that was published on PennDOT's website. There are some smaller projects that are moving forward on an emergency basis. There are approximately 5,700 PennDOT employees that have been furloughed, and most of the remaining employees are working from home. Project lettings scheduled in March and April have been delayed; future lettings may also be delayed, and these delays will have a cumulative impact on the construction season. Things related to the TIP are changing. What is being processed at the meeting is an amendment to add a new project to the TIP, some administrative actions that occurred before the mitigation measures were put in place, and approval from members to take the draft TIP out for public comment.

The first action item is for an amendment to add a transit project to the TIP. Staff is asking members to approve an amendment to add under a half million dollars in FTA funding to the TIP. The funding is a result of a successful application by Geisinger Clinic and PennDOT. The purpose listed in the application was to employ innovative approaches for increasing access to healthcare by combining mobility management and technology solutions.

Ms. Evert from Geisinger provided an overview of the project and stated that Geisinger has been working since the launch of April 2018 on a transportation pilot that provides coordinated rides to clinical appointments, as well as the necessary social services such as grocery store, pharmacy, and senior centers and through a relationship with rabbitransit provide coordinated rides with the most appropriate transit whether it is public transportation, taxi, or private vendors or to support Medicare or Medicaid services.

Ms. Evert stated that over the first year and with a limited scope of eligibility since it was a pilot, over 9,000 round trips were provided and 81% have been for medical appointments and 19% for non-clinical including food pickup, social services and pharmacy. Geisinger submitted an

application in hopes to expand eligibility, serve a larger geographic area, use artificial intelligence and technology solution and increase access to care.

A few months ago, Geisinger received notification that they were awarded close to a half million dollars in FTA funding to expand that eligibility and geographic reach to increase the mobility management. Currently, the pilot program serves patients that live within a 50-mile radius of Danville and Geisinger's urban pilot area is Scranton, PA and that is a 25- mile radius.

With the new technology solution and addition of mobility management services and expansion of the existing transportation, Geisinger anticipates increasing access to care for additional patients throughout the service area. When Geisinger was awarded the grant a few months ago, they were advised to go through the state to access the funding for the FTA grant.

Ms. Dooley asked if there was a flyer to help advertise this to Bloomsburg citizens. Ms. Evert stated that the current pilot program typically relies on case managers handling referrals and talking to patients about eligibility. Ms. Evert stated she could send more information on this as to how to get people enrolled in the program.

Ms. Evert stated that through the relationship with the mobility manager, it is a bridge program for those that are currently eligible for MATP benefits and helping individuals to apply. Approximately 500 patients have been successfully transitioned to MATP and lottery funding as well to help with their transportation barriers.

Mr. Ridgway asked if this is being done in conjunction with rabbittransit. Ms. Evert replied yes. Geisinger decided once the pilot was started to partner with a local transportation agency that owned their own fleet of vehicles. Geisinger uses rabbittransit for many of the rides and also rabbittransit's mobility manager secures subcontractors to help with those rides and they also work with other public transit authorities in the Scranton area as well. Ms. Evert stated that rabbittransit has been a great partner.

***Mr. Molter made a motion for the MPO to approve the TIP amendment for Geisinger's Federal Transit grant; Mr. Ridgway seconded the motion; motion carried.***

Mr. Saylor stated that the next action item is to approve the administrative actions on the TIP for PennDOT District 2-0 that have occurred since the February 2020 MPO meeting. For this period, there are two actions – adding an influx of de-obligated funds that were included in project budgets but were not needed. The second item is to add funding for the local access road on Commerce Drive in Armagh Township, Mifflin County.

***Ms. de Silva made a motion for the MPO to approve the TIP administrative actions for PennDOT District 2-0; Mr. Skavery seconded the motion; motion carried.***

Mr. Saylor stated that the next action item is for PennDOT District 3-0 to add retroactive reimbursement funds to replace a bridge on Montour Street over Mahoning Creek in Danville Borough, Montour County and adding federal funds for two flood repair projects related to the summer 2018 flooding.

***Mr. Phillips made a motion for the MPO to approve the TIP administrative actions for PennDOT District 3-0; Mr. Molter seconded the motion; motion carried.***

## **Draft 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Mr. Saylor stated staff does not think there will be any extensions from PennDOT or FHWA in the TIP adoption process. The MPO will have to conduct the 30-day public comment period and adopt the TIP by the end of July. The movement and work restrictions are likely going to last well into the window that the MPO has to complete the comment period.

A copy of a memo from SEDA-COG staff regarding the MPO Public Participation Procedures for the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program Update was provided in the meeting packet.

Mr. Herman stated that a preliminary draft TIP was submitted to PennDOT Central Office in December 2019. Staff held conference calls with PennDOT Program Center and PennDOT District 2-0 and 3-0 staff in January 2020 and reached a consensus on the TIP projects. The TIP project listing was taken to the MPO meeting on February 14, 2020. The prioritization and scoring of the local bridge projects were completed and three new projects were added to the TIP in Northumberland County and one new project in Union County.

Mr. Herman reviewed the following handouts provided in the meeting packet:

- Draft 2021-2024 SEDA-COG MPO TIP Highway/Bridge Element Summary and At a Glance Charts

Mr. Herman stated there were a few slight changes to the TIP since the February 2020 MPO meeting. The overall TIP value in February was approximately \$377,000,000 and now it is \$375,476,687 due to the omission of the T-439 project over Tea Creek in Mifflin County; that project had \$2 million STP funds so there is a \$2 million overall reduction. Another slight change is on State Route 150 in Clinton County for a Lock Haven signals project. That project now has \$565,000 in regional highway safety improvement funds in fiscal year 2022; in February, this project only had \$122,000 in safety funds in fiscal year 2022.

Other handouts included in the meeting packet:

- 2021 TIP Submission Required Documentation

A public notice for the Draft TIP comment period has been prepared for issuance to the Daily Item along with a press release. Hard copies of the TIP will not be able to be distributed for public display because of COVID-19 mitigation measures so there will be a reliance on online access and electronic distribution. A public meeting will be held during the comment period on May 13<sup>th</sup> from 6-7 p.m. and staff will be looking to run that through Skype.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that after the last MPO meeting, Union County developed some concerns about how the TIP was developed especially the local bridge projects. Staff at SEDA-COG was contacted as there was an apparent scoring error on one of the bridges in Union County in the prioritization ranking. SEDA-COG staff stated the scoring was incorrect and if a higher score would have been used, it would have been one of the top two bridges in the region on the ranking. Mr. McLaughlin stated that he has not seen any revised rankings come out to reflect that and the feedback received from SEDA-COG staff was that PennDOT really did not want that bridge funded. Mr. McLaughlin stated that he noticed that some of the other bridges in other counties that were programmed did not even go through the prioritization ranking process. Mr. McLaughlin stated that he thought as a Board, several years ago it was decided that local bridge projects would be fed into the TIP off the results of the prioritization.

Mr. McLaughlin also stated that the Union County bridge that did get added to the TIP was Union County Bridge 23, which was a surprise as the county commissioners were working with PennDOT since 2017 to get a solution to look at the covered bridge and to do engineering analysis to see what was wrong with it, and PennDOT promised they would provide funding for that and the county was not led to believe it would come through the TIP. Last summer the county developed a project through ECMS with PennDOT staff and PennDOT told the county, the engineers and county commissioners that the project would get underway in 2020, and to the county's surprise it does not show up on the new TIP program until 2023. Mr. McLaughlin stated that the Union County Commissioners are not happy about how some of this has taken place and some of those bridges that were programmed in other counties that didn't go through the prioritization process, one of those is in pretty good condition and has a sufficiency rating of about 80 or 81 based on information the county was able to publicly access. Mr. McLaughlin wanted to know why the error in the bridge rankings was not corrected and reissued with a new scoring to MPO members and why certain bridges were programmed that were not ranked through the process. Mr. McLaughlin also wondered why PennDOT changed the schedule for Bridge 23.

Mr. McLaughlin stated he has heard rumors that folks are saying that Union County has enough bridges and they don't need any more projects. The reason Union County has the projects they do is because the county commissioners adopted the \$5.00 fee and that was available to every county. Union County received \$2 million of incentive money from PennDOT Central Office to do that. Union County just wants the process to be fair.

Mr. Saylor responded and stated that if he gave the impression that PennDOT did not want that bridge funded it was a mistake and it was not his understanding of that. Mistakes were made in how the bridges were scored, there were delays in getting some of the data into the process, and staff did their best to correct the errors and circulate it to the MPO members at the November 2019 meeting. The other issue was that it took long enough to pull the scores together and that we were at the end of the window where PennDOT could reasonably act on the input provided to them as to which bridges were priorities. Programming bridges is a collaborative effort so what is done in scoring those bridges is trying to provide PennDOT with consistent input for the whole region about what the priorities are. One of the issues that made this hard is that Union County is one of the two counties that did not sit down with staff and PennDOT to talk about the priorities. This should be discussed between staff, Union County and their bridge consultant and PennDOT District 3-0 once everyone is back to normal operations.

Mr. McLaughlin stated that Union County did submit their priorities to the MPO and PennDOT and some counties did not submit priorities and they got projects. Union County was penalized because others didn't get their information in on time. PennDOT District 3-0 contacted Mr. McLaughlin during the TIP development and asked why Union County did not submit Bridge 23 as a priority. Mr. McLaughlin replied it was because PennDOT District already committed to funding Bridge 23 and developing a project through ECMS, so why would it be submitted through the TIP. Union County thought Bridge 23 was already funded, and Bridge 2 would have ranked high in the rankings and would have gotten programmed on the TIP. Instead, Bridge 2 disappears, and Bridge 23 ends up on the TIP.

***Ms. de Silva made a motion for the MPO to approve advertising the Draft 2021-2024 TIP for public comment.***

Ms. de Silva asked if Union County is entitled to make comments as the public if they are a participant or do they not have that option. Mr. Herman replied it is an option.

***Mr. Molter seconded the motion; motion carried with a dissenting vote from Mr. McLaughlin.***

Supplemental meeting packet items for consideration by MPO members are posted on the SEDA-COG MPO website:  
<https://seda-cog.org/departments/transportation/seda-cog-metropolitan-planning-organization>

### **Adjournment**

With there being no further comments, Mr. Saylor adjourned the meeting at 10:25 a.m. The next regular meeting of the MPO is scheduled for June 19, 2020.