

**CENTRE COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CCMPO)
COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**Tuesday, April 27, 2021
6:00 p.m.
Virtual Meeting via Zoom**

Minutes

Voting Members

Eric Bernier	College Township
Theresa Lafer	State College Borough
Frank Harden	Harris Township
Pamela Robb	Patton Township
Barbara Spencer	Halfmoon Township
Mark Higgins	Centre County Board of Commissioners
Michael Pipe	Centre County Board of Commissioners
Doug Johnson	Nittany Valley Planning Region
David Veneziano	Lower Bald Eagle Valley Planning Region
Dick Decker	Penns Valley Planning Region
Keith Reese	Upper Bald Eagle Valley Planning Region
Jon Eich	Centre Regional Planning Commission (CRPC)
John Spychalski	Centre Area Transportation Authority (CATA)
Tom Zurat	PennDOT District 2-0
Larry Shifflet	PennDOT Central Office

Non-Voting Members

Matt Smoker	Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)
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Others Present

Tom Zilla	Centre Regional Planning Agency (CRPA)
Jim May	CRPA
Trish Meek	CRPA
Greg Kausch	CRPA
Pam Adams	CRPA
Marcella Laird	CRPA
Anne Messner	CCPCDO
Frank Hampton	PennDOT Central Office
Louwana Oliva	CATA
Dean Ball	PennDOT District 2-0
Eric Murnyack	PennDOT District 2-0
Matt Wise	Senator Corman's Office
David Pribulka	Ferguson Township Manager
Cindy Kunes	Congressman Thompson's Office

1. Call to Order

Mr. Bernier called the meeting to order at 6:02 p.m. and turned the floor over to Ms. Meek, who conducted a roll call of Committee members to ensure they could hear and be heard.

2. Approval of Minutes

Motion was made by Dr. Spychalski and seconded by Ms. Robb to approve the minutes of the February 23, 2021 Coordinating Committee meeting, as presented. The motion carried 14-0 (Ms. Spencer was not in attendance at the time of the vote).

3. Public Comments

There were no comments from the public.

4. 2021-2024 Centre County Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

The Coordinating Committee received a presentation from Mr. Zilla regarding an increase in the estimated cost of the Route 26/45 intersection safety project in Ferguson Township. PennDOT District 2-0 is working to optimize the allocation of federal and state funds on the TIP in response to the impacts of the COVID pandemic. As a result, several funding shifts associated with the Route 26/45 project are being implemented, which will also address the cost increase. Overall, \$2,612,000 in federal funds are being added to the project, and \$2,242,766 in state funds are being shifted from the Route 26/45 project to other projects and a reserve line item on the TIP. Mr. Zilla stated that although the total increase in cost is modest, the net increase in federal funds for this project exceeds \$1.5 million. Thus, formal action by the CCMPO to amend the TIP is necessary to move forward.

With no discussion, *motion was made by Dr. Spsychalski and seconded by Mr. Eich to approve an amendment to the 2021-2024 Centre County TIP to provide additional funding for the Route 26/45 intersection safety project. The motion carried 15-0.*

5. U.S. Census Bureau – Federal Register Notice

The Coordinating Committee received a presentation from MPO staff regarding a U.S. Census Bureau Federal Register notice seeking comment about the proposed criteria that will be used to designate “urban areas” for the 2020 Census. Mr. Zilla stated that based on the 2010 Census, there is one urbanized area and two urban areas designated in Centre County: State College Urbanized Area and the Bellefonte and Phillipsburg Urban Areas. Mr. Zilla then briefly reviewed the most significant changes proposed for the 2020 designation:

- Shifting from a population-based to a housing density-based threshold for designating which census blocks qualify as “urban”.
- Shifting to using only one “urban” area designation and no longer designating “urban” and “urbanized” areas.
- Increasing the minimum population for designating an “urban” area from 2,500 persons to 10,000 persons and adding a minimum housing unit threshold of 4,000 housing units for designating an “urban” area.

In addition, there are several changes to criteria for designation, including:

- Reduced distance of “jumps” along corridors, which may increase the number of non-contiguous areas within a boundary.
- Continues to fill in “holes,” which means that remaining non-qualifying areas completely contained within the initial urban core area and less than five square miles will stay in the area.
- Discontinues “smoothing” of boundaries, which means that indentations and areas not completely within initial boundary will not be added.

The deadline to submit comments to the Census Bureau is May 20, 2021. MPO staff is requesting authorization from the Coordinating Committee to submit comments, if relevant and appropriate, and contingent upon review and approval by the CCMPO Chair. Currently, staff believes that comments will be focused on technical elements and not on policy items.

In response to a few questions from Ms. Lafer, Mr. Zilla explained that the purpose of this is that the data and boundaries will be used related to MPO designations, so if the population threshold for MPO designation changes, it could affect who is designated as an MPO or a Rural Planning Organization (RPO). Currently, the threshold for a MPO designation is 50,000 people in an urbanized area, according to the U.S. Department of Transportation (US DOT). As with the Office of Management and Budget’s proposal to change Metropolitan Statistical Areas from 50,000 persons to 100,000 persons, staff believes that the US DOT could follow the

same proposal; therefore, it will be important to know which populations will be in the new designated urban area in State College. In addition, when PennDOT looks at design standards for a roadway project, there is a link to whether an area is designated as urban or otherwise. Mr. Zilla stated that acceptable levels of service in rural areas are different than acceptable levels of service in an urban area. Mr. Zilla went on to explain that the intent of using impervious coverage in the criteria is to include areas that are within an urbanized area but that may not have any housing or population. Mr. Zilla clarified that in terms of units within the calculations, an individual apartment would be considered a unit. Ms. Messner added that group corridors are still being included within the urbanized area calculations.

Mr. Eich stated that staff should consider including a comment that the CCMPO supports the continued inclusion of group corridors in the Census Bureau's proposal because that criteria affects many areas in Centre County.

Motion was made by Ms. Lafer and seconded by Commissioner Higgins to authorize staff to prepare and submit comments to the U.S. Census Bureau about proposed changes for designating urban areas, if relevant and appropriate, contingent upon review and approval by the CCMPO Chair, and to share any comments with Centre County's Congressional delegation. The motion carried 15-0.

6. Transportation Funding Initiatives

a. Federal Discretionary Funding (Member Designated Projects) Request

Mr. Zilla communicated that in late February, U.S. House of Representatives Committee leaders announced that an opportunity was being provided for House members to submit candidate projects for congressionally directed spending in the upcoming reauthorization of the federal transportation legislation (FAST Act).

MPO staff worked with PennDOT and congressional staff from Centre County's two House members to identify and submit three candidate projects for discretionary funding in the transportation reauthorization legislation. The three projects included the Jacksonville Road Betterment Project, the I-80 Exit 147 Bridge over I-80 at Snow Shoe Interchange, and section 153 of the Atherton Street Drainage/Repaving project. The three projects met federal eligibility criteria and PennDOT guidelines, in particular: a) being on the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and TIP; and b) being able to advance to a bid letting within an approximate 18-month timeframe. The projects also have strong support from PennDOT because of benefits associated with meeting federal performance measure targets for the Interstate and National Highway Systems. Because the submission deadlines were extremely short, MPO staff discussed these candidates with the MPO Chair and Vice-Chair and received their concurrence to submit the projects.

Mr. Reese noted that in the future, MPO staff should email the Coordinating Committee members to make them aware of these type of funding opportunities and that projects are being submitted without direct action from the Coordinating Committee.

Motion was made by Mr. Shifflet and seconded by Ms. Spencer to endorse the submission of the three candidate projects to U.S. Representatives Thompson and Keller to be considered for discretionary funding in the next federal transportation authorization legislation. The motion carried 15-0.

b. PennDOT Pathways Initiative

The CCMPO received a presentation from Mr. Zilla regarding the PennDOT Pathways Program Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study public comment period. Mr. Zilla stated that the Pathways PEL Study has been completed and will be circulated for public comment later this week, with comments on the study due back to PennDOT on June 1. Mr. Zilla explained that initially, staff had this agenda item on for initial discussion to help with the preparation of comments to PennDOT, without knowing the PEL study would be circulated for comments later in the week. Mr. Zilla provided the Committee with a recap

of the PennDOT Pathways PEL information that Mr. Shifflet presented to the CCMPO at its February meeting.

The Coordinating Committee had a brief discussion about where to go from this point forward. There was consensus from Committee members to review the Pathways PEL Study on their own time and submit any comments they may have to MPO staff to be included on a special Coordinating Committee agenda in May. MPO staff will circulate the Pathways PEL Study document later in the week with a timeline of when Committee member comments are due, as well as details regarding the special CCMPO Coordinating Committee meeting in May. The special meeting will be a single-item agenda, focused on discussion and consensus of the PennDOT Pathway PEL Study comments that have been prepared by MPO staff.

7. Performance Based Planning and Programming

a. CATA and Centre County Office of Transportation – Transit Asset Management (TAM) Targets

The Coordinating Committee received a presentation from MPO staff regarding Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan and performance targets for CATA and the Centre County Office of Transportation (CCOT). Per federal rulemaking, all public transit operators are required to develop a TAM Plan and share information about them with states and MPOs; however, there is no requirement for the state or MPOs to approve the TAM Plans and their associated performance targets. CATA maintains its own TAM Plan while the CCOT participates in a statewide TAM Plan. The TAM Plan covers three primary asset categories: rolling stock, equipment, and facilities. Annual individual plans and the statewide plan must assess performance in the previous year and set new targets for the upcoming year.

The CCOT assets evaluated include vans and cutaways, which are light duty vehicles. The CCOT continues to perform favorably compared to statewide averages, and the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) are structured to provide additional support.

CATA maintains its own individual agency TAM Plan and assets evaluated include heavy duty vehicles, light duty vehicles, equipment, and facilities. CATA's goals are more aspirational and continues to make progress toward them with normal and expected peaks and valleys. The 2021-2024 TIP and 2050 LRTP are structured to provide additional support.

The Centre County MPO role in TAM Plans include receiving annual updates on CATA and CCOT plans, as well as adopting TAM targets to guide planning and programming decisions. In addition, future revisions and updates to the TIP and LRTP must reference TAM targets, as well as specific planning and programming actions to help meet them. MPO staff will request formal action at the June Coordinating Committee meeting to adopt MPO asset management performance targets.

b. CATA – Safety Performance Measure Targets

The Coordinating Committee received a presentation from MPO staff regarding the development of a Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) and performance targets, which are federally required for all public transit operators who are either direct recipients or subrecipients of federal Urbanized Area Formula funding. The PTASP and performance targets must be shared with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) and MPOs, and while the FTA has enforcement authority with respect to individual public transportation providers, there is no requirement for MPOs to approve the PTASP and its associated performance targets.

The PTASP is developed to manage risk as a core focus, detect and correct problems earlier, share information more effectively, and measure and analyze data specifically. The PTASP covers four primary indicators: fatalities, injuries, major safety events, and system reliability – in addition to a wide range of associated actions, policies, and procedures. Annual PTASP updates must assess performance in the previous year and set new targets for the upcoming year.

CATA submitted its draft PTASP and performance targets to the FTA for voluntary review before it was adopted by the CATA Board of Directors on December 14, 2020. CATA is in full compliance with federal PTASP requirements. The CCOT is not a direct recipient or subrecipient of federal Urbanized Area Formula funding, therefore it is exempt from these requirements.

The MPO is also required to adopt safety targets to guide planning and programming decisions within 180 days of agency adoption. Future revisions and updates to the TIP and LRTP must reference safety targets, as well as specific planning and programming actions to help meet them. MPO staff will request formal action at the June Coordinating Committee meeting to adopt MPO safety performance targets.

8. PennDOT Project Update

The Coordinating Committee received a presentation from Mr. Murnyack, PennDOT District 2-0 Portfolio Manager, regarding the status of highway and bridge projects in Centre County. The entire presentation can be found on the CCMPO website. Mr. Murnyack reviewed carryover projects, which include:

- State Route (SR) 322 on Port Matilda Mountain: 6 weeks of mill and fill, base repair, paving, and minor draining upgrades.
- I-99 Northbound: Patchwork and paving from the Pleasant Gap exit to highway I-80.
- SR 144: This work involves deck and abutment replacement of southbound SR 144 over I-80.
- SR 322: This work includes drainage and guide rail improvements from SR 144 to the new bridge near Crowfield Road. In addition, there is full depth reconstruction and paving in the same area. Bank stabilization will take place at Bloom Road, with the removal of the existing arch culvert and stream restoration at Potter Run Road.
- SR 3010: This work includes epoxy resin surface treatment on the Valley Vista bridge and the bridge over Spring Creek in Lemont. Both of these locations will include a lane closure for approximately two days at each location.
- I-80: Stage 1, Phase 2A: This work includes reconstruction of the I-80 westbound travel lane and outside shoulder, construction of bridge piers 1, 2, and 3, and construction of the C and D ramps closest to SR 26.
- I-80: Stage 1 Phase 2B: This work includes the reconstruction of the I-80 westbound passing lane and inside shoulder, construction of bridge piers 1, 2, and 3, and construction of ramp C and D closest to SR 26.

Mr. Murnyack then reviewed the construction projects that are currently underway:

- SR 1002 in Curtain Township: Maintenance Box Culvert Tributary to Marsh Creek
- SR 1006 in Boggs Township: Maintenance Box Culvert Tributary to Bald Eagle Creek
- SR 64 to Hubler Ridge Road in Marion Township and SR350 from Sandy Ridge to Taylor Township Line
- SR 0879 in Burnside Township: Bridge preservation project West Branch of the Susquehanna River

Mr. Murnyack then reviewed upcoming projects:

- SR 64 in Walker Township: Intersection Realignment project
- SR 26 in Ferguson Township: Intersection Improvement project
- SR 2011 in Millheim Borough: Tributary to Marsh Creek

Mr. Murnyack then reviewed future projects:

- SR 3014, Section 153 – Atherton Street in State College Borough: Curtain Road to Westerly Parkway streetscape work, signal work, and water and sewer lines
- I-80/I-99 High Speed Interchange Project, SR 26 Local Interchange, and Jacksonville Road Betterment in Marion and Spring Townships
- State College Area Connector Project

In response to a question from Ms. Lafer, Mr. Zurat explained that on the statewide Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) there are line items that have dedicated funding for roadway work and bridge work, and more specifically, bridge preservation projects. PennDOT performs scheduled bridge inspections every year, so if a bridge preservation project is needed, PennDOT has a little bit of flexibility on the TIP to pull funds from the bridge work line item.

9. State College Area Connector (SCAC) Project

The Coordinating Committee received a status update from Mr. Ball, PennDOT District 2-0 Assistant District Engineer, regarding the State College Area Connector (SCAC) Project Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study. Mr. Ball stated that there is nothing major to report, however, the Purpose and Need Document has been reviewed and approved by the cooperating agencies. The entire document is on the PennDOT website to view. In addition, PennDOT finalized the development of range of alternative categories for the study area. The next step is for PennDOT to use a screening tool to analyze each of the alternative categories to see if they meet the Purpose and Need. Mr. Ball clarified that no alternative project has been chosen, and the alternative categories analysis is merely the first step in the process of selecting an alternative project. PennDOT will schedule a public meeting for late August or early September and is working towards a way for the meeting to be live and interactive or in person.

10. CCMPO Safety Subcommittee

The Coordinating Committee received a report from Ms. Messner regarding the status of the CCMPO Safety Subcommittee. The Subcommittee held its kick-off meeting on March 8, 2021 and received presentations regarding the importance of safety from the Federal Highway Administration perspective and the PennDOT Central Office perspective. Intersections of concern in Centre County that were identified by crash data were also reviewed.

The Subcommittee held its second meeting on April 6, 2021. Dean Ball from PennDOT District 2-0 reviewed anticipated safety improvements that have been or will be completed as part of the Atherton Street Drainage/Repaving project in Sections 152 and 153. There are multiple intersections of concern in the Atherton Street corridor and understanding the improvements will help inform the Subcommittee on safety improvement options. Roadway segments of concern in Centre County that were identified by crash data were also reviewed.

In response to a question from Ms. Strickland, Ms. Messner communicated that staff is working on criteria and tools to utilize related to the intersections of concern and plans to present more detailed information at the June meeting.

11. Member Reports

Mr. Bernier communicated that Rural King opened last month in the former Sears space near the Nittany Mall. In addition, the old Krentzman's site was recently leveled for the development of a new Aldi's grocery store at the corner of Shiloh Road and Benner Pike. Mr. Bernier stated that the Township also amended the Zoning Ordinance to provide more flexibility in the changing environment of brick-and-mortar establishments. Lastly, the Township completed a comprehensive evaluation of the entire area around the Nittany Mall and is now engaging with residents and business owners through a Small Area Plan. The Township will consider prior consultant recommendations as well as feedback from residents and business owners to make additional changes to the Zoning Ordinance to possibly allow for more uses in the area.

Commissioner Pipe announced that the County has approved a set aside amount from the \$5 Fee for Local Use program that will draw \$2 million in federal funding to go toward several bridge projects. He thanked PennDOT staff for helping Centre County secure that funding.

Ms. Robb communicated that a new Penn Highland micro hospital has been proposed on Colonnade Way and Waddle Road. In addition, Phoenix Academy is proposing a gymnastics academy on Hawbaker Industrial Drive. Lastly, Patton Township will have a new equine hospital as well as a new Aldi grocery store coming soon.

Mr. Harden communicated that Harris Township is finishing up the final details for the rural rezoning ordinance and maps. The rural rezoning emphasizes maintaining open spaces and preserving agricultural lands and will allow farmers to use their property for agritainment and agribusiness purposes. The rezoning limits residential developments in specific areas with stringent zoning regulations. Mr. Harden stated that this ordinance could be used as a model ordinance for other rural areas.

There were no other member reports.

12. Announcements

The next Technical Committee meeting is scheduled for 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, June 9, 2021 via the Zoom meeting platform. The next regular Coordinating Committee meeting is scheduled for 6:00 p.m. on Tuesday, June 22, 2021 via the Zoom meeting platform. The special Coordinating Committee meeting will take place in May and staff will circulate a schedule for this meeting when the PennDOT Pathways PEL Study documents are sent out.

13. Adjournment

There being no further business, the April 27, 2021 CCMPO Coordinating Committee meeting was adjourned at 8:16 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Marcella Laird
Recording Secretary