

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE  
BUSINESS MEETING  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA  
JULY 15, 2021



**CALL TO ORDER:**

The business meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order on Skype for Business at 1:05 p.m. on July 15, 2021.

*Please note that these minutes are not intended to capture every individual comment, but rather to identify critical discussion points and highlights of the TAC business meetings.*

**CHAIR'S REMARKS:**

TAC Chair, Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, gave brief remarks welcoming TAC members to the meeting.

Ms. Holton reminded attendees that all TAC meetings are recorded for minute taking purposes.

Ms. Holton acknowledged the excellent work that PennDOT staff and the supporting consultants are doing in providing TAC meetings virtually throughout the pandemic. She added that the talkpatransportation.com website has been updated to allow the public and TAC members access meeting materials.

Ms. Holton highlighted the recent release of two documents, the Dismantling Systemic Racism and Inequities report and the Northeast Corridor Commission "Connect NEC 2035 Plan". Ms. Holton recognized Ms. Jenny Granger's excellent work with the Northeast Corridor Commission and that both of these documents are available online.

**MINUTES:**

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Ronald Wagenmann and seconded by Mr. Mark Murawski, and unanimously approved, the Minutes of the April 8, 2021 TAC Business Meeting were accepted.

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

None.

**SECRETARY'S REMARKS:**

Secretary Yassmin Gramian, P.E. welcomed TAC members and guests to the meeting. Secretary Gramian addressed ongoing initiatives including:

- The Major Bridge Public-Private Partnership (P3) Initiative, which is the first of the PennDOT Pathways Program. It was created in response to one of the early findings of the Planning and Environmental Linkages (PEL) Study, which proposed tolling of major bridges in need of replacement or rehabilitation as a potential viable near-term funding

solution. An on-demand virtual public meeting and comment period for the PEL study was held. The public meeting was accessible online at all hours of the day from April 29, 2021 to June 1, 2021. The PEL Study is currently being updated based on public comments.

- The Transportation Revenue Options Commission, which was established in March 2021 through an Executive Order signed by Governor Tom Wolf, is tasked with developing comprehensive funding recommendations for Pennsylvania's vast transportation network. The Commission is comprised of transportation, economic, and community stakeholders from both the public and private sectors, including the majority and minority leaders from the House and Senate Transportation and Appropriations Committees. Secretary Gramian serves as this commission's Chair. The Commission held meetings biweekly since March 25, 2021. The public was invited to watch the proceedings of each Transportation Revenue Options Commission meeting via livestream. A report of Commission activities and funding options will be submitted to the Governor before Aug. 1, 2021.
- President Biden's American Jobs Plan, which includes:
  - An eight-year, \$2.3 trillion proposal paid for primarily through changes made to the corporate tax code,
  - More than \$600 billion proposed for transportation spending
  - \$115 billion to modernize bridges, highways, roads, and main streets "that are in most critical need of repair",
  - Close to \$4.76 Billion, or roughly \$595 million per year over the 8 years for PA if existing distribution formulas are used.

Secretary Gramian also discussed the Electric Vehicle Mobility Plan, the Unmanned Aircraft Systems taskforce, and the Personal Delivery Devices (PDD) law.

## **WORKING SESSION:**

### **2021 Study Topic Identification**

The TAC continues to work on identifying the next study topics. Mr. Brian Funkhouser and Mr. Aarion Franklin of Michael Baker International discussed the proposed scopes of work for the two topics previously approved by the TAC:

### ***Public Transit Demand and Post-Pandemic Mobility Planning and Address Economic Disparities in Rural PA by Increasing Transportation Options***

Mr. Aarion Franklin, from Michael Baker International presented the study scope. He highlighted major tasks the study will undertake including:

#### **Task 1: Literature Review**

- Pandemic Recovery
- Economics
- Transit / Mobility Planning

#### **Task 2: Survey Research**

- Fill in the gaps
- Confirm larger trends exists in PA

### **Task 3 Interviews**

- Major Employers
- Economic Development Professionals
- Real Estate / Property Developers
- Transit Dependent Individuals

Mr. Franklin noted that MPOs and RPOs have been added to the groups to be interviewed.

### **Task 4: Implications and Recommendations**

- Transit Demand
- Post Pandemic Mobility Planning
- Addressing Economic Disparities in Rural PA
- Others

Ms. Holton noted that taskforce members held a meeting prior to TAC meeting.

The TAC further discussed merging two additional topics into a single broad study:

#### ***Demand for Alternate Uses of State Right-of-Way and Importance of and Funding for Pedestrian Networks***

Mr. Brian Funkhouser gave an update about the scoping process. He explained that the study aims to examine how state-owned ROW could be used for non-highway purposes such as: pedestrians, bicyclists, outdoor dining, food truck gardens, etc.

Mr. Funkhouser noted that the study will examine best practices from others states and identify barriers including indemnification.

Mr. Funkhouser also noted that a scope meeting will be held in the coming days with Ms. Karina Ricks and Mr. Brian Hare and that we anticipate the study taskforce will meet at the October TAC meeting.

Mr. Carroll asked if the study will also look at federal regulations on the ROW?

Mr. Funkhouser answered that the scoping process is still in the early stages but it will include both federal and state regulations.

Mr. Murawski asked if the study will look at indemnification issues, especially the special events?

Mr. Funkhouser answered that the study will consider all issues.

Mr. Carroll asked if the outdoor advertising issues will be part of the study?

Mr. Funkhouser answered yes.

Mr. Ritchie commented that the General Assembly has passed Act 36 in June to remove the duplicate municipal indemnification for special events on PennDOT highways.

## **PA MICROMOBILITY FACT SHEET: By Ngani Ndimbie**

Ms. Ngani Ndimbie, from the Policy Office gave an update on the Micromobility fact sheet. Ms. Ndimbie explained the difference between the different devices, the basic characteristics and that current regulatory requirements differ for types of Micromobility devices.

Some devices include:

- Electric Scooter (Can be operated on public roadways, per the recent passage of the Fiscal Code)
- Motorized Pedalcycle (Can be operated on public roadways but not on sidewalks)
- Motor Scooter (Can be operated on public roadways but not on sidewalks)
- Segway (Cannot be operated on public roadways but allowed on sidewalks).
- E-Bike (Allowed on sidewalks in non-business districts)

Ms. Ndimbie mentioned Act 24, which authorizes rental e-scooters on a bike lane, a roadway (with a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour or less) or a bike path in the City of Pittsburgh.

Ms. Holton asked if the Pittsburgh Pilot Program is a permanent change?

Ms. Ndimbie said that the pilot program will run for two years and will be re-evaluated at the end.

Mr. Hennessey commented that the Pittsburgh Pilot program also requires an insurance coverage policy for the allowed devices.

Mr. Michael Carrol commented about some micromobility devices being allowed to ride on existing bike lanes on the Benjamin Franklin Bridge in Philadelphia. He added that he will double check and follow up with the TAC.

Mr. Ritchie provided comments in the Teams chat box noting that E-scooters will be managed under “Move PGH,” which is a *city-led initiative to create an integrated platform allowing residents and visitors access to e-scooters, e-mopeds, carshare, carpool, bikeshare and transit services from the Port Authority of Allegheny County.*

TAC Chair, Ms. Holton, provided follow up information about the Delaware River Port Authority eBike trial period. Ms. Holton noted that DRPA received a request to ride an ebike on the bridge pathway, and after doing some research, DRPA denied the request because motorized vehicles are prohibited according to PA law. Ms. Holton added that DRPA agreed to a 45 day pilot project to get more insight.

More details can be found in this blog post:

<http://www.drpa.org/news/news.asp?param=2&num=8780>

## **2023 12-YEAR PROGRAM OUTREACH UPDATE: By Lugene Keys and Christi Sabb**

Ms. Lugene Keys and Ms. Christi Sabb of McCormick Taylor presented the 2023 12-Year program outreach update.

Ms. Keys explained the 12-Year Update Process saying that the release of the Transportation Performance Report serves as a soft-launch for the outreach campaign. She added that the official kick-off of the public outreach and public comment period follows and includes the transportation survey and public forum.

Ms. Keys noted that at the conclusion of this 45-day outreach and public comment period, feedback received is compiled and analyzed. The results are prepared in a format that is easy to read, understand and compared to the previous cycle. The feedback will also be shared directly with the regional planning partners for their update of the TIPs and the STIP. The updates will then be available for public review and comment next spring (TIPs and STIP). The updated 2023 TYP will be prepared and presented to the STC for adoption in August of 2022.

### ***2021 Outreach Campaign Goals***

Ms. Keys explained that the goal of the outreach campaign is to increase participation and to increase the diversity of the audience the campaign reaches. She said that the outreach campaign also aims to increase the public's understanding of transportation planning and thereby increase their engagement experience in the process. She added that the most recent cycle targeted the 18-24 years age group because they have a very unique perspective to offer on transportation.

### ***2021 Outreach Techniques***

Ms. Christi Sabb discussed the outreach techniques. She explained the Talk PA Transportation website was frequently updated with information about the public comment period and the current number of survey participants. She noted that stakeholder organizations and previous participants were solicited through multiple email blasts encouraging them to take the survey, attend the online public forum, and spread the word.

Ms. Sabb said that the Team also developed weekly social media posts to promote the comment period. She added that in response to the 2019 MPO/RPO focus group recommendations, social media posts were developed in English, Spanish, and Mandarin. A targeted social media advertisement campaign focused on reaching underrepresented groups such as 18-24-year-olds, Spanish speakers, and Mandarin speakers was also implemented.

Traditional print and broadcast media including a press release, the PA Bulletin, and PennDOT newsletters were also used to spread the word, Ms. Sabb added.

Ms. Sabb discussed the online toolkit, which she said is hosted on the Talk PA Transportation website. The toolkit offered downloadable promotional, informational, and educational resources to help promote the Public Comment Period. The page included links to the Transportation Survey and the registration page for the Online Public Forum, as well as a printable version of the survey to share with those who may not have internet access. It also contained social media graphics and animations, as well as a factsheet about the Public Comment Period in English,

Spanish, and Mandarin. Ms. Sabb noted that the toolkit was visited 720 times by 436 different users in 2021 compared to 356 times by 228 users in 2019.

### ***Online Public Forum***

Ms. Sabb explained that the Online Public Forum was held on March 23 at 6:30 p.m. and had over 1,900 live participants. 188 participants used the PAcast platform streamed from talkpatransportation.com, and 1,717 participants viewed it from Facebook Live with a 10 second view or longer. She said closed captioning was available in English and for the first time was also available in Spanish on the PAcast platform. A call-in option for audio participation was also available.

Ms. Sabb said the Forum included a presentation by keynote speaker, PennDOT Secretary Ms. Yassmin Gramian, as well as STC commissioner Mr. Ronald Drnevich and PennDOT Deputy Secretary for Planning, Mr. Larry Shifflet. She added that the Forum was followed by a Q&A session; participants submitted questions for the Q&A session through the registration form, by email, or phone and during the forum through the PAcast platform. A total of 71 questions were received. Ten (10) questions were answered to during the forum, the remaining questions are posted on the Talk PA Transportation website along with the responses. A recording of the Forum with closed captioning is also available on the website for the public to view.

Ms. Sabb discussed the survey results including:

***Modes:*** 75% of respondents indicated they drive alone often or every day. Furthermore, 35% walk, 12% bicycle, 9% use Public Transit, 4% carpool, 3% travel by air, 2% ride passenger rail, and 2% ride a motorcycle often or every day.

***Priorities:*** For the open-ended question where participants could suggest other priorities, the most common suggestions were electric vehicle infrastructure, funding initiatives, and environmental sustainability.

***Alternative Funding Suggestions:*** To the question, *Do you want to increase the budget; Suggest how Pennsylvania can increase transportation funding*, 958 survey respondents provided feedback. Many of them included multiple ideas for a total of 1,365 comments. The most suggested funding source was vehicle miles traveled (VMT), followed by reallocation of money, and tolling.

All of these funding suggestions were provided by the public and not prepopulated.

Ms. Sabb concluded her presentation saying that the Comment Period results are now available on [www.TalkPATransportation.com](http://www.TalkPATransportation.com).

## **PENNSYLVANIA LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN AND FREIGHT MOVEMENT PLAN: By Brian Funkhouser**

Mr. Brian Funkhouser briefed the TAC on Pennsylvania's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and Freight Movement Plan (FMP) update. He discussed the TAC and STC roles in the different plans.

Mr. Funkhouser explained the strategic directions for both plans. For the FMP, he listed:

- Economic development and land use
- Project investments
- Transportation operations and safety
- Data analytical tools

For the LRTP, Mr. Funkhouser listed:

- Safety and security
- Transportation mobility
- Access and equity
- Resiliency
- Conditions and performance
- Funding and finance.

Mr. Funkhouser discussed the Public and stakeholders engagement efforts. He noted that in-reach with PennDOT executives will be held in the coming weeks. Outreach efforts include:

- Statewide Freight Forum
- State Planning Board
- Municipal Associations
- Affinity Focus Groups
- STC Public Forum
- STC Public Survey.

Mr. Funkhouser also discussed the Transportation Data Repository, which will serve as resource toolbox for planning and programing. He listed some important topic areas based on a Planning Partners survey including:

- Infrastructure (Pavements and Bridges)
- Safety
- Freight
- Traffic Demand
- Travel Origins and Destinations
- Travel Time
- Land Use
- Active Transportation
- Transit
- Environmental Justice.

Mr. Funkhouser concluded his update discussing the next steps, which will include:

- Continue Department In-reach
- Development of Draft Final Products

- Launch 30-day Review and Comment Period
- Adoption process with Program Management Committee (PMC)
- Implementation and Tracking.

Mr. Herr commented that the municipalities' planning authority does not give municipalities the ability to deny plans that are submitted and is limited in addressing transportation issues to new onsite improvements. Off site, down the road, you have very little that you can do. He stated that there is the ability for impact fees but, you cannot consider existing traffic into the calculation.

Mr. Wagenmann commented that the changes made to the Partnership Agreements have taken away the municipalities ability to make decisions on development plans.

Chair Holton noted that the same comments have been reiterated in multiple meetings; and suggested TAC looks into the issues.

Executive Deputy Secretary Batula said that the Department is open to having a constructive conversation to solve the issues.

Mr. Murawski proposed the creation of a work group within the TAC to discuss ideas to address the issues.

Mr. Hare commented that the Department will welcome any opportunity to address the current issues with Impact Fees.

Acting Deputy Secretary Keiser and Deputy Secretary Shifflet made similar comments about starting a conversation on the Municipalities Planning Code (MPC).

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Mark Murawski and seconded by Mr. Ronald Wagenmann, and unanimously approved, the Work Group to address MPC issues was created.

### **PA Department of Transportation Update:**

#### **Alternative Funding Program**

Mr. Kenneth McClain, the PennDOT Alternative Funding Program Director provided an update on the PennDOT Pathways Program.

Mr. McClain described the PennDOT Pathways Program, which includes two initiatives: the Planning and Environmental Linkages study or "PEL" and the Major Bridge P3 Initiatives. The PEL will develop and evaluate options for funding our transportation system, with both near and long-term solutions.

Mr. McClain noted that the department held a thirty-day public comment period on the draft PEL from April 29th to June 1<sup>st</sup>. He said that this comment period also included a town hall meeting that was conducted on May 25<sup>th</sup>.



Mr. McClain said that PennDOT is compiling input received from stakeholder through the public comment period and will share the draft with the FHWA for their concurrence by late July.

Mr. McClain also said that funding strategies, such as Bridge Tolling, Managed Lanes, Congestion Pricing, Corridor Tolling, and Road User Charges (vehicle miles traveled fees) and other Fee/Tax increases are being studied.

For the Major Bridge P3 Initiative, Mr. McClain explained that an environmental study will be conducted along with a toll diversion analysis to mitigate potential impacts of tolling on the local communities.

Chair Holton asked if the PTC has been involved in the efforts to mitigate the potential impacts on the low income communities?

Mr. McClain said that cash replenishment is being investigated by the PTC as a potential mitigation strategy.

Mr. Butzer asked how much the PTC will charge for an administration fee?

Mr. McClain answered that there is still ongoing conversations about the exact amount. He said that an interagency agreement that allow for the Department to be charged the same rate vendors are charging the PTC is being discussed.

### **Executive Deputy Secretary**

Ms. Melissa Batula, PE, Executive Deputy Secretary, gave a brief report announcing that Ms. Michelle Jennings is the new Acting Deputy Secretary for Administration.

### **Administration and Budget**

Ms. Michelle Jennings, Acting Deputy Secretary for Administration, gave a brief report about her Deputate. Ms. Jennings said that return to work efforts are underway. Capital Complex employees will progressively start returning to work this month, followed by District employees in August.

Ms. Jennings noted that permanent telework policies have been finalized and applications for agencies are now opened.

Ms. Jennings explained the changes to PennDOT Travel Policy. She noted that the Department had added additional fleet.

### **Driver and Vehicle Services**

Mr. Kurt Myers, Deputy Secretary for Driver and Vehicle Services, asked if the TAC had any questions.

Mr. Murawski asked if the Department will change its Real ID strategy since the deadline has been extended?

Mr. Myers answered that the Department will not change strategy but will cut back on advertising for now.

### **Highway and Bridge Program**

Acting Deputy Secretary Mr. Michael Keiser, P.E., gave an update about Highway Administration Deputate.

Mr. Keiser said that the 2021 letting program is set at \$1.9 billion, and the 2022 program will be in the same range as well.

Mr. Keiser announced that traffic volume for trucks are back to 100% compared to 2019 levels. He added that numbers for motorist traffic fluctuate but are still below 2019 levels.

Mr. Keiser concluded his update noting that hiring for winter maintenance CDL operators has started.

### **Multimodal Transportation**

Ms. Jennie Granger, AICP, Deputy Secretary for Multimodal Transportation, gave a brief update announcing that the Department has advertised for a general contractor for the construction of the Coatesville Train Station.

Mr. Hennessey congratulated Ms. Granger for finally getting the project started.

Ms. Granger said she will reach out to the Transportation Committee chairs for the grand opening.

### **Office of Planning**

Deputy Secretary for Planning, Mr. Larry Shifflet gave a brief update about his Deputate. Mr. Shifflet explained that funding discussions at the State level continue.

Mr. Shifflet said that at the Federal level, the House passed the \$715 billion Invest in America Act, which includes a \$547 billion for surface transportation for five years, while the Senate is also working on its own Highway Act.

Mr. Shifflet also mentioned the American Jobs Plan.

### **OTHER BUSINESS:**

Mr. Daniel Keane announced that Ms. Christi Sabb from McCormick Taylor is attending her last TAC meeting.

### **NEXT MEETING:**

The next TAC business meeting is scheduled for **Thursday, October 7, 2021.**

**ADJOURNMENT:**

**ON A MOTION** by Mr. Ronald Wagenmann and seconded by Mr. John Pocius, and unanimously approved, the TAC meeting was adjourned at 3:13 P.M.

**Attendance from the TAC Business Meeting**  
**July 15, 2021**

1. Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, Chair
2. Ms. Yassmin Gramian, P.E., TAC member
3. Mr. Rodney Bender, alternate for Ms. Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, TAC member
4. Mr. Paul Opiyo, alternate for Mr. Dennis Davin, TAC member
5. Mr. John Kashatus, alternate for Mr. Noe Ortega, TAC member
6. Mr. Dominic Rocco, alternate for Mr. Patrick McDonnell, TAC member
7. Mr. Nolan Ritchie, alternate for Senator Wayne Langerholc, TAC member
8. Sam Arnold, alternate for Senator Tim Kearney, TAC member
9. Representative Tim Hennessey, TAC member
10. Ms. Meredith Biggica, alternate for Representative Mike Carroll, TAC member
11. Mr. Alan Blahovec, CCPM, TAC member
12. Mr. Donald Detwiler, TAC member
13. Mr. Joseph Butzer, TAC member
14. Mr. Elam Herr, TAC member
15. Mr. Mark Murawski, TAC member
16. Dr. Larry Nulton, TAC member
17. Ms. Brenda Sandberg, TAC member
18. Mr. Ronald Wagenmann, TAC member
19. Mr. Michael Carroll, TAC member
20. Mr. John Pocius, TAC member
21. Ms. Melissa Batula, P.E., PennDOT
22. Ms. Michelle Jennings, PennDOT
23. Ms. Sarah Clark, PennDOT
24. Ms. Jennie Granger, AICP, PennDOT
25. Mr. Michael Keiser, P.E., PennDOT
26. Mr. Kurt Myers, PennDOT
27. Mr. Larry Shifflet, PennDOT
28. Mr. Shane Rice, PennDOT
29. Mr. Abdoul Ahmed, PennDOT
30. Mr. Ken McClain, PennDOT
31. Mr. Brian Hare, P.E., PennDOT
32. Ms. Karen Heath, PennDOT
33. Mr. Daniel Keane, PennDOT
34. Mr. Terry Pinder, PennDOT
35. Mr. Brian Sharkey, PennDOT
36. Mr. Mark Tobin, PennDOT
37. Mr. Brian Walters, PennDOT
38. Mr. Michael Rimer, PennDOT

39. Ms. Ngani Ndimbie, PennDOT
40. Mr. Brandon Leach, PennDOT
41. Mr. Roy Gothie, PennDOT
42. Mr. Ronald Grutza, PA State Association of Boroughs
43. Ms. Christi Sabb, McCormick Taylor
44. Ms. Lugene Keys, McCormick Taylor
45. Ms. Samantha Heigel, McCormick Taylor
46. Mr. Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker Int'l
47. Mr. Troy Truax, AICP, Michael Baker Int'l
48. Ms. Leanne Doran, Michael Baker Int'l
49. Mr. Aarion Franklin, Michael Baker Int'l
50. Mr. Tyler Burke, Milliron Goodman
51. Mr. Jim Ritzman, Pennoni
52. Mr. Colin Parry, DCED
53. Mr. Michael Clinger, PennDOT
54. Mr. George DiCarlantonio, PUC
55. Ms. Lindy Music, Pugliese
56. Mr. Brian Ten Siethoff, Cambridge Systematics