

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
JULY 12, 2023



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

CALL TO ORDER:

A business meeting of the Transportation Advisory Committee (TAC) was called to order in the Keystone Building, Room 8N1, and on Microsoft Teams at 10:02 a.m. on July 12, 2023.

CHAIR'S REMARKS:

TAC Chair, Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, gave brief remarks welcoming TAC members to the meeting. She welcomed the new members of the TAC, who said a brief word about their experience. She thanked Vice-Chair Mr. Mark Murawski for representing the TAC at the Senate hearing on aviation as well as aiding in the last STC meeting.

MINUTES:

ON A MOTION by Mr. Ron Wagenmann, seconded by Mr. John Pocius, P.E., and unanimously approved, the Minutes of the February 6, 2023, TAC Business Meeting were accepted without changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

SECRETARY'S REMARKS:

Transportation Secretary Michael B. Carroll spoke of the I-95 collapse response and thanked those involved from local, state, and federal levels, as well as the citizens and public institutions of Philadelphia. He stated that a temporary bridge is built, and permanent repairs will be underway soon. The emergency declaration that was issued allowed PennDOT to move very quickly to get repairs underway.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Executive Office

Executive Deputy Secretary Cheryl Moon-Sirianni gave an update from the Executive Office.

Ms. Moon-Sirianni began by speaking about a hit-and-run construction worker fatality on Route 22. Secretary Carroll added that the perpetrator was caught. Ms. Moon-Sirianni thanked all the people who work at construction sites.

Ms. Moon-Sirianni spoke about the Commonwealth reaching a deal for a new contract with the union. Details were not available at the time of the meeting.

Ms. Moon-Sirianni said that they were working through several hundred National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) applications and trying to find the best candidates to award grant money.

Workforce development is still a struggle. Contractors have reported that they have had problems finding workers. It had been discussed that there is a lack of transportation paths in trade schools, and Ms. Moon-Sirianni requested that anyone with connections to schools contact her. A shared internship between owners, contractors, and consultants is being developed, along with local school events.

Ms. Moon-Sirianni spoke about an on-the-job training program. The necessary training hours have been prohibitive to workers, and the Department wants to lower them to give workers more flexibility in their training.

Administration and Budget

Deputy Secretary Corey Pellington gave an update on Administration and Budget.

Mr. Pellington stated that one of their biggest priorities is getting people into PennDOT and lowering the time it takes to fill positions. They have also identified key licensing/permitting positions and will be pushing those forward to be filled. Another focus is workforce diversity, he noted that the Department has gained several new employees that will be helping look at policies in this area.

Mr. Pellington noted that the District Office projects in Greene and Indiana Counties are on schedule and are looking at completion in the fall.

Mr. Nolan Ritchie asked if the AFSCME agreement was fully executed. Mr. Pellington responded that he could not discuss specifics, but there is a tentative agreement to be ratified in the next month.

Driver and Vehicle Services

Deputy Secretary Kara Templeton gave an update on Driver and Vehicle Services.

Ms. Templeton said the Federal compliance date of May 7, 2025, for REAL ID is still in effect. Allowed forms of identification for REAL ID have expanded to include W2s, 1099s, or full name/SSN paystubs. 2,016,511 Pennsylvanians have obtained a REAL ID, 19.8% of those eligible.

Ms. Templeton stated that the St. Mary's Driver's License Center in Elk County moved from Michael Street to Bucktail Village. This move comes with additional parking, seating, and better environmental impacts for lighting and water utilities.

Ms. Templeton noted that there was a Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase on July 1st. Act 89 allows costs to be updated every other year to match the CPI.

Ms. Templeton stated that License Plate Reissuance continues in order to replace aging license plates, to allow law enforcement and toll agencies to read plates easily.

Ms. Holton asked if the CPI increase covers changes in the past two years? Ms. Templeton clarified that it does and gave the example that the passenger car registration fee went from \$39 to \$45 a year.

Mr. Ed Neilson asked if DVS was planning to open more REAL ID centers as the deadline approaches. Ms. Templeton responded that they would have more information on this in the future.

Mr. Pocius commented that he had recently gotten a REAL ID, that the process was fast and easy, and that he appreciated the work DVS had done.

Secretary Carroll mentioned that one of Gov. Shapiro's charges is to streamline processes and to make things easier for the public to interact with government functions.

Multimodal

Ms. Michele Tarquino, Executive Assistant, Multimodal Transportation, noted that there were no updates at this time.

Highway Administration

Acting Deputy Secretary Mike Rebert spoke about 3D technology. Each engineering district has a pilot project using 3D technology to find where the technology makes sense to use.

The construction letting program, which was estimated at \$2.5 billion last year, increased to \$2.7 billion, mainly due to inflation. The most significant misses on estimates were on longer-term bridge projects, prices of steel, and workforce development. Obtaining steel, raw materials, signal poles, and concrete pipes are items that cause delays. Of the \$2.7 billion, 20% of that is bridge construction, and roadway/highway projects account for 75%.

Mr. Rebert stated that this year's work was estimated to be \$2.7 billion but will be closer to \$3 billion.

Some larger projects that were recently let were a \$53 million betterment project for Interstate 80 near Williamsport, several bridges in the Philadelphia region for \$35 million each, a resurfacing project on Interstate 476 (Blue Route) which goes from the Schuylkill to I-95 for \$63 million, and a betterment project on I-70 for \$31 million.

Mr. Rebert mentioned advertisements for temporary winter operators. He believes they are now streamlined to the point that PennDOT can make conditional offers on-site. Hiring answers need to be provided in weeks, rather than months. There are contracts for on-demand equipment operators as a backup.

Mr. Rebert hoped that the union contract would be good, as PennDOT needs a good rate to be able to continue to develop its workforce. Some contractors are having difficulty finding people to work, especially for night work, and getting supplies like concrete over nights and weekends.

Mr. Murawski asked about how PennDOT decides to use asphalt or concrete. Mr. Rebert discussed a lifecycle cost analysis. There are designs for composite roads, using a concrete base and an asphalt top layer. Concrete is often used in expressways, where long-term traffic protection is possible to allow the concrete to cure. It is important that both the bituminous and concrete industries thrive.

Mr. Murawski asked if that analysis could be shared with municipalities. Mr. Rebert said that it could, and that if a road would be going through the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process, it would undergo that analysis. Ms. Moon-Sirianni stated that they are also looking into other options like white-top, which has not been done before.

Mr. John Pocius asked about structural materials delays, specifically of pre-cast beams and culverts. Mr. Rebert responded that standard shapes are progressing, but oblong and non-standard shapes have a delay. Mr. Pocius asked if there are any Bulletin 15 prequalified new suppliers. Mr. Rebert and Ms. Moon-Sirianni did not believe so but would investigate.

Mr. Pocius asked about the status of the bridge at Great Bend (I-81 Susquehanna Bridges Project), which had been on the news. Mr. Rebert responded that shoulder widening has begun, and the structure is part of the P3 program bridges. The next P3 Bridge is expected to start construction in September within District 10. All six will be under construction in the next year.

Planning

Deputy Secretary Larry Shifflet further discussed the Major Bridge P3 (MBP3) program and that three (3) bridges of the original nine (9) were removed from the P3 project. Two of the three remaining bridges (I-95 Girard Point and I-79 Bridgeville) likely will be rescoped and considered during the 2025 12-Year Program Update. The I-83 South Bridge is still moving forward as a full replacement. The Harrisburg I-83 South Bridge is the priority, and there is a funding plan in development within the current 2023 12-Year Program. The Department will be submitting an application for federal discretionary grant funds for the project, as well.

Secretary Carroll stated that removing the South Bridge from the P3 package allowed for the use of Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) discretionary money. Ms. Holton asked if the bridge was the most competitive for the programs. Mr. Carroll confirmed that it was the most expensive. Mr. Shifflet said that they looked statewide for candidates, and the South Bridge is the top priority for grant opportunities.

Mr. Shifflet continued that the most recent grant successes were \$19 million for two bridges in Pittston. PennDOT has received approximately \$422 million in awards for highways and bridges, and nearly double that when including partners like cities and transit agencies.

Ms. Amanda Rutherford commented that the Reconnecting Communities grant is accepting applications. Mr. Shifflet also directed people to the PennDOT website, which lists grant opportunities and awards. Ms. Holton said that Philadelphia was awarded the grant for the Chinatown community study.

WORKING SESSION:

Truck Parking Study

Mr. Tom Phelan of Gannett Fleming gave a presentation on the Truck Parking Study. The study engages with a complex supply chain with many considerations, such as public highways, private industry, government regulations, and shipping. Some other factors that tie into the parking issue are real estate costs, building costs, local community impacts, and economic opportunities of a truck stop.

The study was last done in 2007, after federal hours of service regulations increased highway parking needs and overwhelmed available parking. It determined that a traditional public/private partnership would not work, as federal law does not allow retail services in a highway rest area

The success factors of the study are: engagement and “buy-in” among public and private sector stakeholders, a methodology to prioritize segments and locations for new truck parking capacity, implementation transition, municipal collaboration for new parking locations outside PennDOT rights-of-way, and ongoing performance measurement and prioritization in conjunction with Freight Movement Plan updates and future funding opportunities.

Many of the problem areas from the 2007 study are still problem areas today: I-81, I-78, and the PA Turnpike. Overall utilization of parking facilities has moved from 91% in 2007 to 103% in 2023. Collaboration with industry stakeholders was used to develop a list of corridor criteria to identify corridors with the greatest need.

Part of the study’s implementation focus is to find potential locations where a facility may be built or expanded using criteria including available land, distance from residential areas, proximity to travel routes and existing facilities, and availability of amenities.

The next steps include completing the prioritization methodologies, framing implementation approaches, and drafting the report. The study is expected to be presented to the TAC and STC in December 2023.

Ms. Moon-Sirianni asked if the study is looking at facilities or amenities. Mr. Phelan responded that the amenities are critical: truckers have regulated 10-hour breaks, and availability of 24/7 bathrooms should be the minimum.

Mr. Colin Parry, policy aide for DCED, asked if the State Planning Board is involved in the study. Mr. Phelan was unsure but said they would reach out after the corridors are identified. Mr. Brian Hare agreed and would provide contact information to the Study Team.

Mr. John Kashatus asked if there was consideration taken from the recent PennDOT Team Challenge conducted by the schools. Mr. Phelan confirmed, saying that the students had taken a very forward-looking approach regarding heavy vehicle charging stations, and that the students did a great job.

Mr. Wagenmann stated that it is important to meet with the local governments that control zoning, and it would be less objectionable to citizens to add the capacity during planning instead of adding it afterward. Mr. Phelan responded that one path is to mandate that destinations must have on-site parking. Still, a potentially better approach is to plan an industrial park that includes retail sites with parking.

Mr. Michael A. Carroll asked what could be done to incentivize landowners to opt for parking and logistics-based land uses. Mr. Phelan responded that there are better use cases for the land than parking and that grant money may be needed.

Mr. Murawski asked if they were looking at other national studies. Mr. Phelan responded that they were, and that they had performed a lot of them, citing a study of a P3 in Nevada.

Mr. Ritchie suggested that the study look at road restrictions, rather than weather events. Ms. Moon-Sirianni recommended talking to the districts for historical data.

Mr. Wagenmann asked if the closed turnpike rest stops could be used for parking. Mr. Phelan responded that they had been closed because they no longer had sufficient space for safe entry/exit ramps. The New York Thruway had a similar issue with their truck pull-offs. It will be an option considered during location identification.

Mr. Pocius stressed educating local planning agencies and municipalities on including truck parking in their zoning plans.

Mr. Carroll asked if a revenue stream could be created from amenities, and if it could be a Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) application. Mr. Phelan said that it's becoming more common that the truck parking itself is the commercial part with reserved parking and per-night costs.

Local Match Challenges Study

Mr. Brian Funkhouser from Michael Baker International gave a presentation on the Local Match Study. Study Task Force Chair, Mr. Elam Herr, gave a brief statement thanking the consulting team and committee for their work, stating the study is on track and the results are looking positive.

Mr. Funkhouser stated that the objectives of the study are to identify constraints that may limit flexibility toward waiving or reducing local matches, to understand and define the extent of the problem for municipalities with a high share of tax-exempt real estate, to understand trends involving untaxed parcels, and to identify options for assisting municipalities, options for local funding and best practices.

The study kicked off in May and is in the Data Collection phase. This will continue with a review and workshop on the findings. The report is expected to be ready in December. The study was originally to do five case studies but has since expanded. There will be interviews, a statewide survey, as well as a targeted survey to fifteen target areas. The five case study areas selected are Benezette Township, the Cities of Coatesville and Johnstown, Clearfield Borough, and Potter County.

The next steps for the study are to collect the survey responses, develop the case studies, and conduct outreach with the case studies and targeted surveys.

Mr. Parry asked where the survey could be found. Mr. Funkhouser said it was sent out by the Center for Rural PA directly to municipalities but was not on their website. Mr. Parry said that DCED would be interested in the survey and results.

Study Implementation Updates

Mr. Murawski suggested that the chair of a completed study act as an ambassador for the study and try to make sure TAC studies are considered for implementation after completion. He suggested a standing agenda item be added, where a chair of a study can report on progress since completion.

To start the new item, Mr. Murawski gave an update on the previous year's aviation study. The PA Senate held a Transportation Committee hearing, attended by many aviation groups, about the state of aviation in PA. The TAC report was presented, and there was much enthusiasm in the aviation community for implementing the results of the study. Aviation groups will reorganize themselves around the recommendations of the study and are willing to put together a legislative framework for implementing some of the recommendations for a potential aviation bill.

Ms. Holton agreed and will add it as a standing item to future TAC agendas.

TYP Outreach Results

Mr. Dan Keane gave an update on the results of the 2025 12-Year Program Public Outreach. The official comment period ran from March 1 through April 30, but unofficially started in January with pilot pop-up events at the Farm Show and Auto Show. The survey surpassed its goal, with 10,573 responses, and 4,248 mapped issues at the close of the comment period. This is the highest response ever from the survey. The survey also had the highest return ever from respondents under 25 years old.

The most common modes of travel reported were driving alone, walking, and bicycling. Respondents' highest infrastructure priorities were road pavement, bridges, and walking. Walking rose in priority from 5th to 3rd since the 2021 update. Other common priorities were safety initiatives, environmental sustainability, and electric vehicle infrastructure.

In budgeting, respondents reallocated more of their budget to technology, ride more/drive less, and bicycling, as opposed to the 2021 update. Their alternate funding suggestions were reallocation of money, vehicle miles traveled, and tolling. Of mapped issues, 2,284 were roadway, 1,082 were pedestrian/bike, 463 were transit, and 378 were bridges.

The full results are available on TalkPATransportation.com, along with regional summaries of the data, and a web map of the mapped issues.

Ms. Holton congratulated Mr. Keane on hitting the public input goals. Mr. Keane gave special thanks to the McCormick Taylor consultant team and the TYP team.

Ms. Holton asked if the survey was specifically sent to counties and MPOs. Mr. Keane responded that the survey was sent by email to all the MPOs and Districts, as well as to Public Transit agencies.

Ms. Moon-Sirianni asked how the results are drilled down to the municipality level. Mr. Keane responded that they are working with the LTAP section, to potentially be able to get the data down even further.

MEMBER UPDATES:

None

OTHER BUSINESS:

None

Adjournment

ON A MOTION by Mr. Ron Wagenmann, seconded by Mr. John Pocius, P.E., and unanimously approved, the TAC meeting was adjourned at 12:02 p.m.

**Attendance from the TAC Business Meeting
July 12, 2023**

1. Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, Chair
2. Mr. Mark Murawski, Vice-Chair
3. Mr. Michael B. Carroll, Acting Secretary of Transportation
4. Mr. Rodney Bender, alternate for Ms. Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, TAC Member
5. Mr. John Kashatus, alternate for Mr. Khalid Mumin, TAC Member
6. Ms. Laryssa Gaughen, alternate for Representative Kerry Benninghoff, TAC Member
7. Mr. Sam Arnold, alternate for Senator Tim Kearney, TAC Member
8. Mr. Nolan Ritchie, alternate for Senator Wayne Langerholc, Jr., TAC Member
9. Mr. Colin Parry, alternate for Mr. Rick Siger, TAC Member
10. Mr. Jacob Finkel, alternate for Mr Akbar Hossain, TAC Member
11. Mr. Ed Neilson, TAC Member
12. Mr. Kyle Wagon seller, alternate for Mr. Ed Neilson. TAC Member
13. Ms. Tiffany Landis, alternate for Mr. Rich Negrin, TAC Member
14. Mr. John Pocius, P.E., TAC Member
15. Mr. Alan Blahovec, CCTM, TAC Member
16. Mr. Michael A. Carroll, P.E., TAC Member
17. Mr. Larry Nulton, TAC Member
18. Mr. Ron Wagenmann, TAC Member
19. Mr. Elam Herr, TAC Member
20. Ms. Kara Templeton, PennDOT
21. Mr. Larry Shifflet, PennDOT
22. Mr. Brian Hare, PennDOT
23. Mr. Mark Tobin, PennDOT
24. Ms. Kristen Mulkerin, PennDOT
25. Ms. Erin Waters-Trasatt, PennDOT
26. Ms. Alexis Campbell, PennDOT
27. Ms. Michele Tarquino, PennDOT
28. Mr. Corey Pellington, PennDOT
29. Ms. Marisa Balanda, PennDOT
30. Mr. Dan Keane, PennDOT
31. Ms. Lauryn Knuth, PennDOT
32. Mr. Terry Pinder, PennDOT
33. Mr. Brian Sharkey, PennDOT
34. Mr. Kevin Wray, PennDOT
35. Mr. David Lapadat, PennDOT
36. Ms. Jessica Clark, PennDOT
37. Ms. Sadie Trout, PennDOT
38. Mr. Roy Gothie, PennDOT
39. Mr. J Brian Walter, PennDOT
40. Mr. Nate Walker, PennDOT
41. Ms. Jennifer Crobak, FHWA

42. Ms. Amanda Rutherford, MARAD, US DOT
43. Mr. Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker International
44. Mr. Casey Bottiger, Michael Baker International
45. Mr. Thomas Phelan, Gannett Fleming
46. Mr. Keith Chase, Gannett Fleming
47. Mr. Mario Mellinger, McCormick Taylor
48. Mr. James Ritzman, P.E., Pennoni
49. Mr. Andrew Lemon
50. Mr. Sean Walshe
51. Mr. Richard Barcaskey
52. Mr. Anthony Panuccio
53. Mr. Ed Troxell
54. Ms. Alizabeth Schmidt
55. Mr. Anthony Hennen
56. Mr. Ron Grutza PSAB
57. Mr. Justin Gensimore