

PENNSYLVANIA STATE TRANSPORTATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
BUSINESS MEETING
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
DECEMBER 6, 2022



Please note that these minutes are not intended to capture every 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 10:05 a.m. on December 6, 2022.

CHAIR'S REMARKS:

TAC Chair, Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, gave brief remarks welcoming TAC members to the meeting. She took an opportunity to thank the legislative members, Senator Langerholc, Senator Kearney, Representative Hennessy, and Representative Carroll, and their respective staff members for their service and contribution to the TAC. She also thanked Secretary Gramian for her work over the last few years.

MINUTES:

ON A MOTION by Mr. John Pocius, seconded by Mr. Michael Carroll, P.E., and unanimously approved, the Minutes of the October 11, 2022, TAC Business Meeting were accepted without changes.

PUBLIC COMMENT:

None.

SECRETARY'S REMARKS:

Acting Executive Deputy Secretary Ms. Melissa Batula, P.E., provided remarks. She thanked Ms. Jody Holton for her work as TAC Chair, followed by the other TAC members for their contributions to the Department. She commended and is excited by the work of the TAC and the Transportation Revenue Options Committee (TROC), stressing the importance of determining future funding given the diminishing revenues from the gas tax.

Ms. Batula mentioned federal highway funding sanctions that may occur if the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) is not successful in submitting the State Implementation Plan (SIP) to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by the December 16 deadline. Sanctions would affect approximately \$800M worth of federally funded projects in 2023.

Ms. Batula discussed the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). She noted that BIL increased emphasis on Discretionary programs as a means of funding projects beyond the formula

programs. In calendar year 2022, the Department submitted 12 Highway/Bridge project grant applications. The Department is working in conjunction with other DOTs as a co-applicant on several projects, and the cities of Philadelphia and Pittsburgh have already received Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grants.

Ms. Batula discussed the status of the P3 Project, Major Bridge Initiative. Although Act 84 removed the ability to move forward with the tolling of these structures, it did state that work could continue on any P3 projects already underway. Ms. Batula also noted that the P3 projects have several local Pennsylvania construction and design companies working on them.

Mr. Carroll asked about the State Implementation Plan for the DEP and whether the action was all in the Executive Branch right now.

Ms. Batula said we are through the Executive Branch, and the actions holding up submission are mostly administrative at this point. She believes they will meet the December 16 deadline.

Mr. Pocius commented that the EPA has extensive enforcement efforts and stressed the importance of meeting their needs.

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION UPDATE:

Administration and Budget

Ms. Batula gave an update in place of Ms. Michelle Jennings, who was unable to attend. She reiterated the necessity to hire truck operators and mechanics. She also mentioned that two former Secretaries of PennDOT, Leslie Richards and Barry Schoch, were named to the gubernatorial transition team, which should make the process easier for the Department.

Driver and Vehicle Services

Mr. Steve Madrak was attending in place of Deputy Secretary Kurt Myers and gave a brief update on Driver and Vehicles Services (DVS). He stated that the Department of Homeland Security extended the deadline for enforcement of Real ID until May 7, 2025.

Highway and Bridge Program

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

Mr. Keiser confirmed that the Digital Delivery Initiative is still on track for 2025. The Initiative aims to modernize Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's (PennDOT) project delivery processes and contract document media to incorporate digital data, and the plan is to be bidding on projects digitally by 2025.

Mr. Keiser said the 2022 letting program, announced at \$2.5B, will most likely increase to around \$2.74B. Unfortunately, the number of projects decreased from 726 to 573 due to general inflation, supply chain, and workforce issues. The newest budget reduced PA State Police funding to \$500M and gave PennDOT immediate additional cashflow opportunities. The 2023 letting program was announced at \$2.7B.

Mr. Keiser next mentioned the lack of temporary and permanent plow operators for the winter season. During more significant storms with multiple periods of snowfall, the Department may be quicker to restrict travel based on lack of coverage and will look to clear primary routes, such as interstates and expressways, as the priority. The Commonwealth will see trucks much less on lower-volume roadways during those times.

Mr. Nolan Ritchie mentioned that a constituent, who is a volunteer firefighter, expressed interest in plowing roads and asked if PennDOT has considered utilizing volunteer drivers.

Mr. Keiser stated that the logistics of planning routes would make that difficult. If the individual is interested in working for PennDOT, they should visit a District Office for information.

Multimodal Transportation

Acting Deputy Secretary Mr. Andrew Batson, AICP, gave a brief update on the Multimodal Deputate. He stated that two Consolidated Rail Infrastructure and Safety Improvements (CRISI) Grant applications were submitted by PennDOT to the Federal Railroad Administration last week. One application is for expanding the Pennsylvanian service to Pittsburgh, and one is for the overhauling of a 100-year-old freight line in Northwest Pennsylvania.

Mr. Batson mentioned the kickoff of a Shared Ride Sustainability study that should be completed by the end of March 2023. He also commended the TAC's recognition of and commitment to the importance of multimodal transportation.

Mr. Ritchie mentioned that Act 89 provides a minimum of \$450,000,000 for transit from the General Fund and asked if PennDOT provides any guidance to transit agencies on where to get information regarding the distribution of those funds.

Mr. Batson said information on how the funds were previously spent is included in the PennDOT Annual Report that is provided to the general assembly every April. He also stated that there is an annual application process for transit agencies to apply for their needs, as well as the Capital Planning Tool.

Office of Planning

Deputy Secretary Mr. Larry Shifflet gave a brief update on the Planning Deputate.

Mr. Shifflet mentioned that BIL provided certainty at the State level in terms of federal funding. The Department is operating under Continuing Resolution, however, through December 16, 2022, and expects it to be extended.

Mr. Shifflet highlighted a few discretionary grant applications that are currently under consideration, such as the Central Susquehanna Valley Transportation Project (CSVV) for \$83.2M, I-95 Section GR6 for \$177.2M, and I-83 South Bridge for \$500M.

Ms. Holton asked about matching funds for these grants, and Mr. Shifflet said we would need help on the State match from legislators.

WORKING SESSION:

Pennsylvania Aviation Needs Assessment and Strategic Action Plan

Co-Chair Mr. Mark Murawski made opening remarks stressing the importance of this study and how impressed he was with the work done by the consultants, committee members, and aviation leaders throughout Pennsylvania.

Mr. Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker Intl., gave an overview of the completed aviation study. He began with a summary of statistics from the aviation industry, highlighting the growth in demand largely due to e-commerce. He then touched on different outreach and engagement tactics to get stakeholders involved in the study, including eight regional listening sessions with over 150 participants. The meetings were so successful that an additional General Aviation Statewide listening session was added. Mr. Funkhouser and Mr. Murawski also met with various interest groups around the state.

Mr. Funkhouser explained that the study's first phase dealt with the revenue and available funding for the aviation industry. The task force evaluated four funding scenarios with recommendations of diverse funding sources, a flexible starting point for policymakers, and a \$53.5M State investment to fill the unmet needs.

Mr. Funkhouser explained that the second half of the study focused on a strategic framework for leveraging new investments in the industry. More than 30 issues and opportunities were identified and organized under eight broad categories:

- Workforce
- Economic Impact / Economic Development
- Airports and Communities/Land Use
- Air Freight
- Commercial Air Service
- Technology
- Industry Collaboration and Partnerships
- Legislation and Policy

He then stressed the importance of involving many different leaders in aviation across the state in the implementation of the study to continue the momentum from the research.

Mr. Murawski asked if Mr. David Heath, Director of the PA Drone Association and/or Mr. Fran Strouse, Co-Chair of the funding task group, would like to make any comments regarding the study.

Mr. Heath said that this study is a starting place for aviation organizations to take a step forward and expressed the importance of using this study when we have a government changeover in January as a framework for what needs to be addressed in the aviation industry.

Mr. Strouse expressed his approval of the study and said it would be a great tool in the future.

Dr. Larry Nulton, Co-chair of the task force, thanked Mr. Heath for his assistance with the study.

Mr. Tony McCloskey commended the task force team for their efforts. He stressed the aging infrastructure in the aviation industry in Pennsylvania and said that other states often find the funding for the necessary improvements. He then explained some possible benefits of investing in the aviation industry, such as economic development and early education, to increase interest in aviation-related careers.

Mr. Batson stated that Pennsylvania had seen a decline in revenues over the last 20+ years. This investment would not be an expansion but getting the industry back to where it was and where it needs to be within Pennsylvania.

Mr. Murawski commended the consulting team and everyone else who worked on the study.

Mr. John Kashatus asked if this study would address the depleted workforce and negative public image of the aviation industry nationwide.

Mr. Murawski stated that the study shows how we need to implement tracks through our education system and the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) to cultivate new relationships and increase knowledge and awareness for future careers in aviation.

Mr. Pocius commended the committee and the consultants on their work and said he was proud to be a part of it.

Ms. Felicia Dell commented that the timing for this study is perfect for the York County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) because they are kicking off a freight study that will explore some aviation aspects. The TAC aviation study will be a crucial building block and information source for their freight study.

ON A MOTION by Mr. John Kashatus, seconded by Mr. Alan Blahovec, and unanimously approved, the *Pennsylvania Aviation Needs Assessment and Strategic Action Plan* study was approved.

Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE)

Mr. Todd Trautz presented the ASE pilot study, a review of Automated Speed Enforcement on Roosevelt Boulevard in Philadelphia. He laid out the structure and framework of the study. The goal of the task force was to determine the effectiveness and merits of the ASE program, evaluate other states' practices, and provide considerations and recommendations for the future of the ASE program.

Mr. Trautz displayed that speeding violations and crashes have decreased significantly since the implementation of the program. He then touched on some of the major findings of the report:

- Legislation – The current ASE legislation is written so that the program could be extended on the Roosevelt Boulevard Corridor and expanded to the statewide program.
- Safety – The program is effective at improving driver behavior and reducing speeds

- Financial – The cost to run the program exceeded \$2.8M in 2021 and \$3.4M in 2022; however, the program has generated over \$35M in net revenue. This revenue is deposited to the motor license fund and could be used to fund statewide safety and mobility projects.
- Equity – The ASE program takes any potential bias out of traffic stops.

Mr. Trautz then went over the five key recommendations from the study:

1. Enact legislation to extend and expand the ASE program
2. Develop a formal process for evaluating proposed ASE locations
3. Provide technical assistance to municipalities
4. Increase public engagement and transparency
5. Continue funding safety projects near ASE locations

Mr. Carroll, Chair of the study, stated that the benefits of this program should be permanent rather than on a trial basis, and it should be spread statewide, citing a 90% reduction in speeding violations.

Mr. Elam Herr stated that the final report, rightfully so, has an emphasis on safety rather than generating revenue. He also stressed that if we do go statewide with this program, we must keep it uniform throughout all locations to avoid any issues.

Mr. Pocius asked if the violations were challengeable or if any had been dismissed, for example, if someone else was driving the car.

Mr. Carroll stated he did not have statistics but had heard of a few that were dismissed. This is not a moving violation, so no court dates are given. The process is handled similarly to parking tickets.

Mr. Ritchie stated that explicitly written within the law, motorists have certain acceptable defenses, including whether the device has been calibrated.

ON A MOTION by Mr. Elam Herr, seconded by Mr. John Pocius, and unanimously approved, the *Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE)* study was approved.

STUDIES UPDATE:

Transportation Performance Report (TPR)

Mr. Funkhouser gave a status update on the TPR. Mr. Funkhouser and his team have met with PennDOT executive staff for their input on what should be included and highlighted in the report, as well as bureau-level staff for more detailed data. The write-ups should be circulated around to the different bureaus for approval shortly, and the digital report will be presented to the TAC at the February meeting.

Study Selection Process

Mr. Funkhouser gave a status update on the study selection process. He mentioned the five study topics received so far from TAC members.

- PA Gas Tax Revenue Forecast

- Local Match Challenges
- E-Commerce Transportation Assessment
- Truck Parking
- Wildlife Vehicular Collisions

Mr. Funkhouser also shared topics that were ranked by the state Freight Work Group. He made it very clear that the TAC does not have to consider the work group's recommendations.

Ms. Rebecca Oyler gave an overview of her proposed topic – ***Potential Truck Parking Locations***. She stressed that truck parking is a critical issue nationally and locally, with peak times in Pennsylvania having 105% utilization of spaces. She mentioned that there are several federal discretionary grant programs available for truck parking. She also said there is a bill proposed in congress to provide special funding for truck parking, and we should be prepared with a plan to utilize that funding if we do in fact, receive it. She closed with the three reasons this is a critical issue:

1. Safety – fatigued drivers, trucks parking on the side of the road and entering the highway from the shoulder
2. Economic Development – Lack of parking is affecting supply chains. Drivers are using an average of 52 minutes per day to look for parking.
3. Infrastructure – Trucks using roadways in unintended ways, such as parking on the shoulder, can cause unnecessary damage to our infrastructure.

Mr. Pocius said this is an issue he often notices when driving in his area, showing his support for the study by calling it a “no-brainer.”

Ms. Batula suggested the study should dig into some of the root causes of the lack of truck parking and document what the contributing factors are, to which Ms. Oyler agreed.

Mr. Murawski asked Mr. Funkhouser if any of these study topics had a scope of work document drawn up yet.

Mr. Funkhouser said a digital survey would be distributed to TAC Members within the week. Once the priorities of the TAC are in order, he will work with the Center for Program Development and Management to develop Scope of Work documents for the top candidates.

Ms. Holton asked if anyone else wanted to share input regarding their study topic.

Mr. Sam Arnold shared information regarding the ***E-Commerce Transportation Assessment*** study topic. He noted some of the proposed revenue numbers from the TROC report are eye-popping. He said if folks are to have a new revenue projection tool, it would be useful to the legislature to have more information regarding how it would work. They are looking for more informed projections of revenue and where the economic impact is on transportation infrastructure. How much is from rail freight? How much is from truck freight? How much is from aviation?

Ms. Batula concurred and said we must document the direct impact it has on infrastructure.

Ms. Holton suggested that this one may be a white paper.

Mr. Kashatus asked if the truck parking issue was the 2022 Innovations Challenge.

Ms. Batula confirmed that there is a challenge for the high school students to submit ideas and said that this potential study would not interfere with the challenge but go hand-in-hand with it.

Ms. Holton reminded the TAC members to fill in their study survey by December 20th.

Ms. Oyler said the TROC completed a thorough analysis of the gas tax revenue projections and questioned what additional information the *PA Gas Tax Revenue Forecast* study topic would provide.

Ms. Batula said there were some things left undone at TROC when they used a blanket number for trucks and cars evenly, and part of this study would be a deep dive into how the projections can be made in the future.

Mr. Ritchie said if the intent is more to align with a recommended fee, such as a mileage-based user fee, the proposal could be reworded to make it a more deserving selection. Try to accent the factors that were evaluated to develop a potential Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) tax.

Mr. Shifflet stated we need to coordinate with the PennDOT Pathways program to make sure we are not duplicating efforts.

Mr. Ritchie stated he is very impressed with the Department's website for Mileage-Based User Fees (MBUFs).

Ms. Batula said PennDOT had joined Road Usage Charge America (or RUC America, formerly RUC West), which works with western and eastern states to elevate the MBUF discussion nationwide.

Ms. Batula then agreed with Ms. Holton that we should retool this submittal.

Mr. Funkhouser mentioned that the survey results would be shared prior to the February TAC meeting.

MEMBER UPDATES:

None

OTHER BUSINESS:

Next Meeting

The next TAC business meeting is scheduled to be held at the Keystone Building 8N1 and virtually on **Monday, February 6, 2023**.

Adjournment

ON A MOTION by Mr. Alan Blahovec and seconded by Mr. John Pocius, and unanimously approved, the TAC meeting was adjourned at 12:24 p.m.

Attendance from the TAC Business Meeting **December 6, 2022**

1. Ms. Jody Holton, AICP, Chair
2. Mr. Mark Murawski, Vice-Chair
3. Ms. Melissa Batula, P.E., alternate for Ms. Yassmin Gramian, P.E., TAC Member
4. Ms. Aimee Wechsler, alternate for Ms. Allison Jones, TAC Member
5. Mr. Rodney Bender, alternate for Ms. Gladys Brown Dutrieuille, TAC Member
6. Mr. John Kashatus, alternate for Mr. Eric Hagarty, TAC Member
7. Ms. Tiffany, alternate for Mr. Ramez Ziadeh, TAC Member
8. Mr. Paul Opiyo, alternate for Mr. Neil Weaver, TAC Member
9. Ms. Meredith Biggica, alternate for Representative Mike Carroll, TAC Member
10. Mr. Nolan Ritchie, alternate for Senator Wayne Langerholc Jr., TAC Member
11. Dr. Larry J. Nulton, TAC Member
12. Senator Tim Kearney, TAC Member
13. Mr. Sam Arnold, alternate for Senator Tim Kearney, TAC Member
14. Mr. Richard Barcaskey, TAC Member
15. Mr. John Pocius, P.E., PLS, TAC Member
16. Mr. Michael Carroll, P.E., TAC Member
17. Ms. Felicia Dell, TAC Member
18. Mr. Alan Blahovec, CCPM, TAC Member
19. Mr. Elam Herr, TAC Member
20. Ms. Rebecca Oyler, TAC Member
21. Mr. Josiah Shelly, House Transportation Committee
22. Mr. Michael Keiser, P.E., PennDOT
23. Mr. Larry Shifflet, PennDOT
24. Mr. Anthony McCloskey, PennDOT
25. Ms. Erin Waters-Trasatt, PennDOT
26. Mr. Shane Rice, PennDOT
27. Mr. Michael Bonini, PennDOT

28. Ms. Karen Heath, PennDOT
29. Ms. Lauryn Knuth, PennDOT
30. Mr. Daniel Keane, PennDOT
31. Mr. Mark Tobin, PennDOT
32. Mr. Brian Sharkey, PennDOT
33. Mr. Terry Pinder, PennDOT
34. Ms. Kristin Mulkerin, PennDOT
35. Mr. Brian Walter, PennDOT
36. Mr. David Lapadat, Alternate for Legislative Affairs, PennDOT
37. Ms. Jessica Clark, PennDOT
38. Mr. Andy Batson, AICP, PennDOT
39. Ms. Alexis Campbell, PennDOT
40. Ms. Michelle Tarquino, PennDOT
41. Mr. James Nicaastro, PennDOT
42. Mr. Stephen Madrak, PennDOT
43. Mr. Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker International
44. Mr. Todd Trautz, Michael Baker International
45. Mr. Jim Ritzman, P.E., Pennoni
46. Mr. Matt Rucci, Office of Mr. Tim Hennessy
47. Ms. Sadie Trout, Legislative Policy Office
48. Ms. Nicki Jacobs, GPI
49. Ms. Angie Armbrust, McNees Law
50. Ms. Natalie Cook, McNees Law
51. Ms. Margaret Durkin, Bravo Group
52. Mr. David Heath, PA Drone Association
53. Ms. Alizabeth Schmidt, Clarion County Transportation
54. Mr. Fran F. Strouse, P.E., PA Aviation Advisory Committee