



CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

March 11, 2021

This meeting was held virtually on

<https://morgantownmonongaliampo.my.webex.com/meet/baustin>

Members Present:

Christiaan Abildso (Chair), Chip Wamsley, Tom Zeni, Kelli LaNeve, Ed Sneckenberger, Heather Britton,

Others Present: Bill Austin, Jessica Shuey

1. Call to Order

Mr. Austin noted that due to the COVID 19 pandemic, the CAC meeting is being held as a teleconference. The phone number and web address to access the teleconference were publicized.

With a quorum present, Chairman Abildso called the meeting of the CAC to order at 6:00 PM.

2. Approval of Minutes

Chairman Abildso noted that the minutes of the last meeting were included in the agenda packet. Mr. Sneckenberger noted that the minutes did not include his inquiry about the process of approving works performed by consultants. Mr. Sneckenberger noted that he has submitted comments on the minutes for other editorial errors. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO will make the correction accordingly.

Mrs. Britton moved to approve the minutes as corrected; seconded by Mr. Wamsley. With no discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

3. TIP Amendments

Mr. Austin noted that the DOH has proposed amendments to the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program. The amendments will remove some bridge projects to a bridge bundle program developed by the DOH in receiving a BUILD grant from the FHWA. Those bridge projects include the Westover Bridge project, Uffington I/C +1 project, the I-68 SB Ramp Bridge project, and USAC Daniel Mehringer Memorial Bridge NB & SB project. In addition, the DOH requested deletion of Beechurst Ave at 6TH (GO GOND 4). The project is to be merged to the University Ave- Campus Dr project. The DOH also requested adjustment on the funding for the Van Voorhis Rd project and University Ave-Campus Dr project.

Mr. Abildso asked about the reason for increasing the funding for the Westover Bridge project. Mr. Austin noted that the previous amount is a placeholder for the engineering phase. The DOH update the information with a more accurate amount.

Mr. Sneckenberger asked about the decrease of funding for the right-of-way phase of the Van Voorhis Rd project and the type of right of way to purchase for the project. Mr. Austin noted that the number reflects

the amount of funding necessary for the project based on a more detailed engineering survey and design. The right-of-way involves the spaces for shoulders and pavement edge.

Mr. Wamsley moved to recommend approval of the proposed TIP amendment to the Policy Board; seconded by Mr. Zeni. With no discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

4. FY 2021-2022 UPWP

Mr. Austin noted that the draft FY 2021-2022 UPWP is included in the agenda package. Mr. Austin noted that the UPWP includes a request for \$200,000 (80% Federal, 10% State, 10% Local) in additional funding for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update, a 2.75% cost of living increase for MPO staff, and two work items for Mountain Line Transit. The work items for Mountain Line are a review of selected intersections where Mountain Line vehicles have to make left turns to identify any operational improvements that could facilitate the movement and improve safety, and a review of Mountain Line data to identifying heavily utilized locations heavily used by Mountain Line passengers that could use the sidewalk and or bus shelter improvement.

Mr. Zeni moved to recommend the adoption of the UPWP to the Policy Board; seconded by Mr. Wamsley. With no discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

5. Scope of work for Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update

Mr. Austin noted that MPO staff is finalizing the contract with the consulting firm for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan Update. The draft scope of work for the update is included in the agenda package. The scope includes an extensive public involvement process, an update of the regional travel demand model, and the creation of a fiscally constrained transportation plan. The work for the MTP update is to be performed in conjunction with the preparation of comprehensive plans for Monongalia County, the City of Morgantown, Star City, and Westover. The proposed cost of this work is \$250,000, of which 80% will be provided by Federal funds, 10% from State funds, and 5% each from Monongalia County and the City of Morgantown. This project is funded partially in the current fiscal year and it is included in the FY 2021-2022 UPWP.

Mr. Austin noted that MPO staff requests a CAC recommendation to the Policy to adopt this scope of work and to authorize the Executive Director and the Policy Board Chairman to enter into the contract for this work upon successful completion of the negotiations. Mr. Abildso asked if the contract is only for the scope of work of the transportation plan. Mr. Austin noted that it only includes the works for the transportation plan update. The county and municipalities will negotiate with the consulting firm under separate contracts. Mr. Austin noted that Mon County, Westover, and Granville came close to finalizing their contract. Star City currently has concerns about the cost. The City of Morgantown has recently hired a new planning director. The new planning director will negotiate the scope of work with the consultant for the city's Comprehensive Plan Update.

Mr. Zeni noted that virtual public involvement has both advantages and disadvantages. He then asked about the impact of the pandemic on public involvement. Mr. Austin noted that DOH has used visual meetings for several highway projects in the area and received positive feedback from the community about those meetings. Mr. Abildso noted that the consultant used an online platform in developing the recently adopted pedestrian and bicycle plan. The process was successful.

Mr. Sneckenberger expressed his appreciation to the DOH for the work on Van Voorhis Road.

Mr. Sneckenberger moved to recommend approval of the proposed scope of work to the MPO's Policy Board, seconded by Mrs. Britton. With no discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

6. Performance Measures

a. Pavement Management/Bridge Maintenance

Mr. Austin noted that the FAST Act requires that the State Departments of Transportation adopt performance measures for a variety of transportation purposes. The MPO recently adopted the state's Highway Safety performance measures. In addition to safety, Congress expressed an interest in ensuring that roadway surfaces and bridges are well maintained. To accomplish this, the states are to set goals for the condition of their pavement and bridges.

b. Congestion Management

Mr. Austin noted that besides the performance measures on maintenance, the State has also developed goals for the measures on congestion management, including travel time reliability and emission reduction. Mr. Austin noted that the table showing the State's goals are included in the agenda package.

In the State Transportation Improvement Program, the DOH uses the PM1 for safety-related measures; the PM2 for maintenance-related measures, including bridges; and the PM3 for travel time liability-related measures.

Mr. Wamsley moved to recommend the adoption of the proposed goals for the performance measures to the MPO's Policy Board; seconded by Mr. Zeni. Mr. Sneckenberger noted that he doubts the accuracy and reliability of the data used to measure those performances. With no further discussion, the motion was passed. Mr. Sneckenberger abstained.

7. Mountain Line Transit Study

Mr. Austin noted that the Mountain Line Transit Authority has recently completed a short to medium-range transit plan. The Plan reviews Mountain Lines' current operations and makes recommendations for improvements. The executive summary of the study is included in the agenda package. The full plan is available at the MPO's website.

Mrs. Britton moved to recommend approval of the Study to the MPO's Policy Board; Seconded by Mr. Wamsley. Mr. Sneckenberger expressed his appreciation of mapping the current and potential job hubs for the next five years in the executive summary. Mr. Sneckenberger also noted that the concept of micro-transit zones should be more clearly explained in the summary. Mr. Austin noted that he will pass the comments to the consultant team. Without further discussion, the motion was passed unanimously.

8. Don Knotts Boulevard Crash Report

Mr. Austin noted that the crash report on Don Knotts Blvd is included in the agenda package. He noted that the report identifies several high crash locations particularly at Pleasant Street, Greenbag Road, Smithtown Road (SR 43), and Foundry Street. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO has got better access to the DOH's crash database. The Committee members can request the MPO staff to prepare similar crash reports at other locations of their interest.

Mr. Austin noted that the DOH representative from the TTAC mentioned that engineering studies might use different methods to analyze crashes when it comes to identifying specific solutions to improve intersection safety and efficiency.

Mr. Sneckenberger asked about specifying the type of vehicles involved in crashes. Mr. Austin noted that the vehicle data are available and that the in-depth analysis on vehicles often performed in engineering studies, rather than planning studies.

Mrs. LaNeve moved to recommend approval of the report to the MPO's Policy Board; seconded by Mrs. Britton. Mr. Zeni noted that the number of crashes at the Callen Ave intersection is lower than expected and asked about traffic count on Callen Ave in the future. Mr. Austin noted that Callen Ave is an important street connecting the first ward to Don Knotts Blvd. The MPO will consider including this location in the annual traffic count program. Mr. Abildso agreed and noted that he is looking forward to the traffic volume data on Callen Ave. Without further discussion, the mission passed unanimously.

9. Other Business

Mr. Austin noted that the DOH is finalizing the policy on the definition of the groupable project category in the Transportation Improvement Program. The DOH will submit the policy to the MPO for adoption.

Mr. Sneckenberger asked about the staff change in the City of Morgantown. Mr. Austin noted that Mr. Fletcher left the City. The City has hired a new Planning Director, who will negotiate a contract for the city's comprehensive plan update with the selected consultant.

Mr. Abildso asked about tracking past DOH grants awarded to the area. He noted that some committed funds for trail improvements did not carry through to the Mon River Trails Conservancy. Mr. Austin suggested checking with Ella Belling, the Executive Director of the MRTC, for the status of those grants.

8. Meeting Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 7:20 pm.