A meeting of the Rural Transportation Planning Committee was held at 10:30 AM on Tuesday, April 9, 2019, at the North Central Pennsylvania Regional Planning and Development Commission in Ridgway, PA. Chair Jeremy Morey opened the meeting with the pledge to the flag and asked for introductions of the following attendees:

**Voting Committee Members & Alternates**
- Richard Castonguay, Retired
- Cliff Clark, Cameron County IDA
- Frank Hampton, PennDOT Central Office
- Will Hunt, Potter County Planning
- Bob Mecca, LIFT
- Harold Swan, PennDOT District 10-0
- Jeremy Morey, McKean County Planning
- Vickie Rusnak, PennDOT District 2-0
- Rick Viglione, PA Downtown Center
- Bob Shaffer, DuBois Regional Airport

**ex Officio Members /Guests**
- Karen Michael, PennDOT District 2-0
- Robert Jaconski, PennDOT District 2-0
- Dennis Prestash, PennDOT District 2-0
- Michael Sherman, FHWA
- Stan Niemczak, Jacobs
- Brian Funkhouser, Michael Baker
- Tracy Frampton, The EADS Group
- Amy Auman, Self Determination Housing/PA

**Via Conference Call**
- Sara Andrews, OECD
- Coletta Corioso, ATA
- Terri Dennison, PA Route 6
- Kristie Marston, ATA

**North Central Staff**
- Amy Kessler
- Mary Lou Jessop

**Approval of Minutes**

Chair Morey asked for approval of the February 12, 2019, Rural Transportation Planning Committee meeting minutes. With no corrections or additions, **Will Hunt moved to approve the February 12, 2019, meeting minutes as presented, seconded by Bob Mecca. Motion unanimously passed.**
FY 2019 TIP Administrative Actions & Amendments

District 2-0

Regarding District 2-0 Vickie reported there are various movements on the Administrative Actions to keep projects moving along.

#1 – SR 120 East Driftwood Slide – Swapped out Federal funds in exchanged for State Highway (581);
#6 – UNT to South Br Pine Creek BOX, SR 144, Section A02 box culvert. This was replaced by #12. This was on for District Maintenance to do but was too big. Will reassess for 2021 TIP.
#12 – Branch of Genesee River, SR 49, Section A09 – box culvert from #6. Looking at a 12/21 let date.
#22 – Philipsburg Add Center Lane, SR 322, Section 267 – additional funding required due to requirements for wetland mitigation and design.
#23 – WNYPA Corridor RR Warning Device, Annin Township, Section R14. There are six crossings that PennDOT will be working with – two are warning and the other four are new crossings with new equipment and devices.

The others are minor administrations actions.

District 10-0

Regarding District 10-0 Harold Swan reported there are five Administration Actions he wanted to point out.

#2 – T459 Spruce Street Culvert – replacement of existing structure which is part of a local bridge retroactive reimbursement program. Project complete and municipality is seeking reimbursement. District is looking to add this project in its construction phase to the TIP in 2019.
#8 – PA28/US 322 Brookville Intersection, SR 28, Section 572 – Intersection reconfiguration, drainage, etc. After the first public meeting there was a need to re-evaluate the project scope due to public comments and concerns in regards to safety and sight issues on Evans Street in Brookville. Additional survey, cultural resource and geo-technical work is needed. Environmental consultants were added to deal with the issues.
#9-10 – Indiana Hill Bridge, SR 119, Section 559 – District to add Utility Phase of this project to the TIP in 2019. Funds needed as actual utility re-location cost was slightly higher than previously estimated due to additional traffic control measures. Funds will be from surplus on #9 – Simpson Run Bridge.
#11-12 – Thompson Run Bridge #1, SR 28, Section 552 – Add Utility Phase in FY 2019. Source would be preliminary engineering funds from Simpson Run project.
#14 – Simpson Run Bridge, SR 28, Section 553 - Advance Utility Phase from FY 2021 to 2019 and change funding from 100% Federal to 80% Federal/20% State. Source would be preliminary engineering funds within the same project.

Public Transit

Regarding Public Transit Amendments, Coletta stated that the changes included in the submission were to address the Federal funds that have been allocated for #1 - the Bradford Terminal Project.
Now that ATA has actual dollar amounts there was a modification to the Plan and PennDOT wanted ATA to make that adjustment.

#2 - ATA was asked to review their Vehicle Replacement Project 107018 to identify specific funds and to project it out further. They didn’t want to have the entire project in one year.

#24 – 25 - Coletta also said they removed the St. Marys and Punxsutawney canopies and are pursuing other funding options for those projects.

Frank stated that these changes were shared at the February meeting for PennDOT to submit an amendment on behalf of ATA.

Chair Morey called for a motion to accept the TIP Administrative Actions and Amendments as presented. Dick Castonguay made the motion to accept the TIP Administrative Actions and Amendments as presented, seconded by Frank Hampton. Motion unanimously passed.

2018 Annual Obligated Project Report

This was sent out earlier and Amy said we, as MPOs and RPOs, are required every year at end of the Federal Fiscal Year to put out a report that lists all the projects that were obligated in that fiscal year. For this Plan it was for October 1, 2017 through September 30, 2018. If you don’t have a copy, it is on our website. This report is due every December so you will see this as an annual listing of obligated projects for Highway, Bridge and Public Transit. If you have any comments on the report or it doesn’t make sense, please let Amy know and it can be adjusted for the next period.

PennDOT Regional Operations Plan (ROP)

Amy stated that one of the things that we, as part of District 2-0 and District 10-0, have to do is a Regional Operations Plan. Denny Prestash of PennDOT and Stan Niemczak of Jacobs were here to make a presentation on what this means and how it benefits us in the transportation world.

Denny stated that this presentation is on the Regional Operations Plan is for Districts 2-0, 3-0 and 9-0. They have had all their planning agencies as part of this and Amy has been part of these ROPs.

Denny started off about talking about TSMO (Transportation Systems Management & Operations Plan). TSMO means that PennDOT and partners are looking to reduce congestion and improve safety through improved operations vs building our way out of construction. They use TSMO to help develop the ROP.

The purpose of TSMO is a way of addressing reliability, mobility and congestion by using various strategies.

The goal through this process is to reduce crash rates and improve safety, reduce congestion and improve traffic flow.
Denny and Norm went over a Power Point presentation which outlined some of the ways to achieve this.

Bridge de-icing, closed circuit TV cameras, dynamic curve warning, message signs integrated corridor management, queue warning, road weather information systems, traffic signal enhancements and variable speed limits are some of the solutions that are being discussed.

Solutions would vary according to each District’s needs. In-depth information is included in the Power Point Presentation.

If you have any questions or comments regarding this presentation, please contact Amy.

Chairman Morey thanked Denny and Norm for their very informative presentation.

**Multi-County Comprehensive Plan (Cameron, McKean and Potter Counties)**

Brian Funkhouser of Michael Baker International gave an update on the Multi-County Comprehensive Plan. A steering committee meeting was held in February, changed from January due to bad weather. They established a series of workshops, one in each county to convene members of the steering committee and other people who participated in other meetings to really start getting down to the specific action items.

Through the survey work interviews that have been done and four cross-cutting goals have been identified that are uniform for the three counties dealing with 1) improving education and skills training, 2) focusing on business attraction and retention, 3) investing in downtown amenities and 4) expanding and improving infrastructure. These are going to be the broad level goals and through these workshops that will be held at the end of the month, they will be inviting steering committee members to work to identify specific actions in support of each one of those goals. The four goals will be uniform across the three counties; however, the actions themselves will be unique to each one of the counties.

They are looking at a follow-up public open house, probably in late May and then they will have the fourth meeting of the steering committee to show the results of the workshops and any reactions from the public that were received during the May open house.

Chair Morey thanked Brian for his update.

**Risks to Transportation Funding in Pennsylvania**

Amy prefaced Karen’s presentation by saying things they have been hearing through Financial Guidance that there’s a potential financial cliff that could be impacting the Commonwealth. We know that our interstate system is severely underfunded according to the Federal Highway Administration. We could basically take our entire statewide pot of money and not be able to maintain the interstate system. How do we prioritize those networks? In those conversations they started hearing about some of the risks that were on the horizon for transportation. Amy reached
Karen Michael, District Executive for District 2-0, did a Power Point Presentation on Risks to Transportation Funding in Pennsylvania. A study was commissioned by the Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Commission (PTAC). This commission was established in 1970 along with the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation under Act 20. This body works with PennDOT and the State Transportation Commission (STC), to look at planning further out and see what needs are out there in the future to see if PennDOT is going where they need to be going.

Pennsylvania’s transportation needs are significantly underfunded. PennDOT knows right now they have a shortfall in the Interstate Program. They are anticipating needing $2.5 billion additional funding. Looking at highways and bridges $1.8 billion additional funding and Public Transportation an additional $1.2 billion.

Additional cost pressures further strain resources. Those include emergency repairs, regulatory compliance, modernization and inflation.

Pennsylvania Transportation Funding Sources for FY 2018-2019 is $8.5 billion. The funding sources are Federal Transit - 5%, Federal Highway and Bridge – 20%, State Public Transportation Assistance Fund – 3%, State Multimodal Transportation Fund - 2%, State Public Transportation Trust Fund – 15% and State Motor License Fund – 55%.

There were five Risks analyzed: Federal Transportation Funding Reduction, Vehicle Sales Tax Provision Repeal, Pennsylvania Turnpike Commission pending litigation, Pennsylvania State Police Transfer Statutory Revision and Reduced Motor License Fund Tax Receipts.

Total potential Risk Impact equals $18.5 billion cumulative loss in funding through FY 2029-2030. That breaks down to Federal Funding at Risk - $6 billion, PA Public Transportation Trust Fund and Multimodal Transportation Fund Revenue at Risk - $5.8 billion and PA Motor License Fund Revenue at Risk - $6.7 billion.

Six billion dollars could reconstruct half of Pennsylvania’s interstates from Federal Funding at Risk. The $5.8 billion from the PA Public Transportation Trust Fund/Multimodal Fund Revenue at Risk is equivalent to about five years of public transportation state-of-good-repair funding and the $6.7 from the PA Motor License Fund Revenue at Risk could reconstruct half of Pennsylvania’s interstate bridges.

Implications of Reduced Transportation Funding under Highways and Bridges would lead to deteriorating roadway conditions, increased long term costs due to deferred maintenance and more weight-restricted and closed bridges. For Public Transportation it would be reduced public transportation service and fewer new buses, trains and transportation centers. Other Modes would be reduced including multimodal projects such as sidewalks, traffic signals, crosswalks, bike lanes,
trains, airport access road improvements and decreased funding for water port and freight rail funding.

Pennsylvania must have a modern and efficient transportation system for the long term. It requires necessary investment to keep the system in a safe state of good repair and present resources do not cover the need. Risks to transportation funding could further compound this problem. For the foreseeable future, risks to transportation funding will be an essential focus.

In-depth information is included in the Power Point Presentation. If you have any questions or comments, please don’t hesitate to contact Amy.

Amy said for the next TIP update we are likely going to see less money as a region and more of a focus on the NHPP Network, which are the interstates, Route 219 and Route 6. That is where the Transportation Asset Management Plan is going to come in and focusing on lowest life cycle cost improvements. By default the four-digit SRs, non-NHPP network will likely have less money. The prioritization of projects and the treatment type will be very important. We might have projects that are on our current TIP that we might not be able to fund because of financial guidance and less money coming in to us. This TIP isn’t going to be fun to develop with less resources.

Amy asked Coletta and Rick if there was anything they heard today that is different from what they are hearing from the transit side because the most immediate impact is June 30 with public transit. Amy sent out some of the project delays or push-backs but what impact will transit have come July 1.

Coletta thinks that the rurals have a little bit of insulation in the short term so they are not going to see necessarily the cliff right at June 30. They do have some concerns going forward and there are some efforts to try to address that. Rurals, because they get Federal 5311 funds and there happens to be a reserve, the operating and the capital projects that ATA has in play right now for the coming year are funded. She said it takes so long for them to fund the projects that the projects she is talking about getting are the ones that were submitted for 2019 and will get them in 2020.

From the operating standpoint, she thinks ATA will see some holdbacks but beyond that they don’t know what will happen.

Regarding the Medical Assistance Transportation Program, which ATA administers for three of the counties and which you don’t hear too much about, the DHS had an RFP out to basically institute a statewide brokerage system. That has impacts for ATA in the region and the DHS felt they could save $15 million. It will probably cost the State $30 million.

Dick Castonguay added that the Medical Transportation is going to be a disaster. There is a Bill pending to try to delay or take another look at it. It was legislation that was passed at the last minute last year put forth by a representative or senator from the northeastern part of the State that creates that brokerage. It is a fixed amount of money and the state is not going to save. It is going to cost them more but a lot of the counties use this money to move people and it is going to go away.
Coletta added that the DHS thought they were just dealing with their client group and they wanted to improve statewide access. What they are doing is putting pressure on the public transportation system. Coletta has a projection for the first year in brokerage that ATA would end up losing, in our region, about $700,000. You can’t eliminate enough routes and services that you just don’t destroy what people use because of all of those inter-connections. ATA is very concerned about the impact to public transportation, the pressure for fares to rise and for services to decrease. It’s a big challenge.

Amy asked if the Department of Health had any conversations or were they instructed to have any conversations with the Bureau of Public Transit into the RFP process and those impacts or was this a standalone, because this is non-medical transportation and their clientele and they went at it alone.

Coletta said there may have been conversations but DHS has a long history of wanting to do this. While they might have invited transit to the table to talk, DHS had every intention of moving forward.

Performance Measures (PM 1, PM 2 and PM 3)

There was a lengthy handout so Amy isn’t looking to have approval at this meeting, but she would have to do an email approval before our next meeting to give you a chance to review this unless you are willing to approve it.

Back in October, we adopted that State’s Performance Measures for Safety, Pavement Bridge, etc. We have an agreement from late 2018 with ATA on the Transit Asset Management Plan on the procedures that is being used.

We are required to develop a document that shows about how we are going to share information on these Performance Measures and that is what this document lays out. It is the written procedures that we have agreed, as the RPO, to adopt the statewide targets for Pavements, Safety and Bridges on our side and ATA has agreed to follow the Transit Asset Management Plan and those performance measures and this is the information that is going to go back and forth. For the one you have today it is the written procedures for the Pavement, Bridge and Safety.

All the MPOs and RPOs will have to adopt this or come up with their own data sharing agreements on how we are going to report it. Our Long Range Plans in the future will have to then put in a Performance piece The Feds are putting their foot down on performance of the system and the priority is Interstate System, and it’s Safety on the NHPP Network. That is for now. It might jump into other networks at a later date but they are really focusing on the Interstate and NHPP Network.

Amy can give you some time to review this and then she’ll send out an email asking for an email vote by the end of April. Or if you are comfortable with it to approve the process today, that is fine. This is going out statewide for all Planning Partners.

Chair Morey asked if there was a motion from the floor for either option, review and do an email vote or approve it today.
Bob Shaffer moved that the Performance Measures be accepted as presented, seconded by Dick Castonguay. Motion unanimously passed.

Amy said there is an official letter that comes from the State that we have to electronically sign that says we have adopted this.

**Future Planning Studies**

Every couple of years we put together, with PennDOT, our Work Plan. Amy asks people what corridor or planning activities are the counties looking to do, or the Districts that you want us to incorporate into our Work Plan for future planning activities. They are for funding or just for coordination. Please start thinking between now and the end of the year and if you have things that are of interest to you, let Amy know. This is in the beginning stage of engaging people of what you see as planning priorities moving forward. Our staff will work on this with you or potential additional funding that may come through. For additional funding there is an 80/20 match so any local project we do would require the 20% local match.

**Route 219 Update**

Amy noted that Jeremy, Jodi Foster and Amy met with Craig last week. He has taken over for Continental 1. He took over from Meg who has retired and Mike who has left. There was a misconception of Continental 1 that we, primarily Amy, doesn’t support 219 and we reiterated that this has never been the case. We don’t support a $6 billion four-lane super highway without knowing where the funding would come from. We also told him how important Route 219 is to us and that our discussion with Meg had always been incremental improvements of where we can improve that travel time on 219 and/or alleviate chokepoints.

For whatever reason that communication was lost when it got back. It was four lane, four lane, four lane. Craig has a lot of damage control to do from the public perspective of really what is Continental 1 and pushed him to focus on the critical importance of 219 and to get those systematic improvements done.

You could fund a four-lane highway all the way down through this area from Bradford to I-80 and it would save 15 minutes of time. As an example Amy said if she could give McKean County $50 million where would you spend it? It wasn’t going to build a mile of four-land on 219. Craig kind of got that but for some reason that was lost.

Jeremy stated that Craig even said a four-lane from Toronto to Miami is not the plan for Continental 1 which we have been told for years. That is not Continental One’s plan and it was refreshing to hear.

It was a good meeting. Amy thinks we will see more of that conversation. We offered to go and meet with their Board to talk about where we see safety issues, or intersection issues, or bottlenecks which we can use from the operation data to flush out where we can do projects that might be TIP related on that NHPP Network that are just small $3 – 4 million projects that will help get traffic through a little more efficiently.
There is a new person at the Bradford Alliance, Carolyn Newhouse that used to be with DCED. Amy had met with her at their Sinergy meeting and talked the same thing. There are new people on that board that are looking at Continental 1 from the importance of the corridor, not as a mission for four lanes.

**Committee Vacancies and Nominations – Housing and Redevelopment Opening**

Amy Auman was nominated by Bob Mecca and the County to fill the opening on the RPO Committee. This is Amy’s first meeting so we haven’t had an opportunity to meet and have any conversations. If this is something that intrigues her and is of interest to her, we would certainly welcome her to be a part of this Committee.

It is important in the conversation of housing, access to transportation, dealing with a different clientele that we are not used to hearing. When we start looking at projects what are the impacts of our decision-making on people that she works with and how do we benefit or not burden those individuals.

Amy A. asked what does the Committee need to know about housing and how can she help.

Amy K. said that when we look at projects if we are putting in a road or bridge project or a transit route, how is it going to benefit or burden the clientele that you work with? Are we going to impact a housing complex that you aware of or do we need to be aware of what is going on in that area? For example, there may be 20 housing units in a certain area that needs access to transportation. Is that a conversation when we are looking at transit routes that ATA is aware of that they can start looking at the possibility of serving that area? Or if we are replacing a bridge in front of that facility, how do we continue to have access to the people that live there and what type of access is that. Is it vehicles, pedestrian, bicyclists?

Amy A. said that most of this is something she can help with and if not an area she specifically deals with, she would find the information.

Amy K. stated that we are not only looking for your specific facilities, but representing the broader picture.

Amy A. said they cover the entire State and she works closely with the local housing and redevelopment authorities.

Dusty Dennis used to be on the Committee representing this sector.

This nomination will be tabled for now and Amy K. will meet with Amy A. and have a conversation and if she is comfortable with it, we will go from there. Amy K. will send some dates for later in April to meet.

**Other Open Discussion/Updates**
Dick said he is seeing significant numbers of dead trees in the forests. Are we going to see an increase in timber cutting to try and salvage those before they are total wastes and increases on our local roads and state roads? Does anyone know what is happening?

Jeremy believes there is an effort going on at least in McKean/Potter to cut all the ash they can right now, get it down before it dies and is of no value. He doesn’t know if that is continuing around the State and in walking in the woods the only trees that are marked for cutting are the ash.

Karen said they did a partnership project with the Allegheny National Forest along with the municipalities of Ridgway Township and Spring Creek Township and the ANF told them that the ash was the strong point. There were three other species of trees that they wanted down, which she can’t remember what they are.

Amy announced that we did receive a POWER Grant to do a Regional Freight Plan. We are working on the final scope of work with Michael Baker International and will be looking to form a steering committee, hopefully with a lot of private sector on the group.

If anyone wants to participate on that committee to please let Amy know. She is looking to start this around May/June as soon as they can finalize the scope of work and start putting together a schedule. It is something we will be using some of our resources for with the POWER Grant to update our plan from some time ago to look at the freight and goods movement impacts. That will be coming shortly.

At the next meeting in June we will probably more of a kick-off conversation.

**Adjournment**

With nothing else to be discussed Chair Morey called for a motion to adjourn. *Frank Hampton moved to adjourn the meeting at 12:15 PM.*