

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission
Meeting Minutes
Held at Fay-Penn Economic Development Council & Fayette County
And via Cisco WebEx Meeting
4 p.m. – June 26, 2023

The one hundred and sixty-second meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission was called to order by Chairman Leslie Osche.

Members: Darin Alviano, Mike Belding, Kevin Boozel, Tom Ceraso, Douglas Chew, Amber Davis, Scott Dunn, Pat Fabian, Rich Fitzgerald, Ed Gainey, Kim Geyer, Shelia Gombita, Mark Gordon, Kelly Gray, Lynn Heckman, Sherene Hess, Mark Hillard, Fred Junko, Sean Kertes, Bill Kovach, Brian Leach, Bob Lesnick, Dave Lohr, Bob Macey, Larry Maggi, Jack Manning, Jeff Marshall, Betsy McClure, Don Myers, Leslie Osche, Mavis Rainey, Aurora Sharrard, Larry Shifflet, Byron Stauffer, Jr., Vince Vicites. and Blair Zimmerman.

Others: Ann Ogoreuc, Allegheny County Department of Economic Development; Mark Rafail, Fayette County; Laura Kuhns, Fayette County; Mary Over, Fayette County; Tammy Nedrow, Fayette County; Kaylie Moore, Fayette County; Angela Saunders, PennDOT 12; Paul Ritta, Daily Courier; Mark Hofman, Harold Standard, and Mitchel Henderson, Senator Fetterman's Office.

Staff: Mary Brangan, Kirk Brethauer, Leann Chaney, Faith Collins, Ronda Craig, Tiffany Cummings, Dom D'Andrea, Linda Duffy, Margaret Fonner, Ryan Gordon, Chuck Imbrogno, Tom Klevan, Jenn Lasser, Caitlin O'Connor, DJ Ryan, Josh Spano, Ailisa Sobien, Cathy Tulley, Vincent Valdes, and Andy Waple.

1. Chairman Osche called to order the June 26, 2023 meeting of the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission.
 - a. Quorum – There being a quorum present the meeting proceeded.
 - b. Any Conflict of Interest Declaration on Action Items - None
2. Action on Minutes of the April 24, 2023 Meeting.

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the April 24th meeting by Commissioner Vicites which was seconded by Commissioner Fabian. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

3. Public Comment – None
4. Guest Presentation from Fay-Penn Economic Development Council—Laura Kuhns, Executive Director

Ms. Kuhns stated “In pursuit of its charitable, scientific and educational objectives (under 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code), the purposes of the surviving corporation shall be to stimulate all phases of economic development in Fayette County, to promote industrial development and tourism and recreation, to encourage the improvement of community facilities and services, education and cultural facilities, health services, and housing and transportation (highways, air, rail, and water), to support comprehensive planning and redevelopment and preservation of the environment and natural beauty of the County, and to pursue other activities which will improve the quality of life in Fayette County.”

Current major initiatives - Appalachian Regional Commission -Arise Grant Partnership for Appalachian trails and heritage “path” project components

5. Guest Presentation from Republic Food Enterprises—Lyssa Greer, Marketing Manager, and Joseph Ambrose, General Manager

Mr. Ambrose explained that Republic Food Enterprises is bridging the gap from our farm to your table. We are located in Republic, PA. We serve as a comprehensive center for the development of sustainable food products across Western Pennsylvania. We work to bridge the gap from farm to table.

6. Report/Briefing on the public comment period/responses on the updates to the region's Long- Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Environmental Justice Benefits and Burdens Assessment of the Draft LRTP, Air Quality Conformity Determination for the LRTP, and Amendments to the LRTP to reflect project phasing and cost information included – Dom D'Andrea, Director of Transportation Planning

Mr. D'Andrea stated that this presentation will cover many of the key aspects of the LRP development such as schedule, public involvement, the review of the plan's policies and strategies.

Then we will cover the transportation planning and LRTP project list development including a look at current TIP funding and project advancing from the LRTP to the TIP, some of the listed current LRTP projects, and some projects under consideration for listing in the outer years of the plan. We will then shift gears a little to discuss the new Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, some of the discretionary programs that came out of it, and SPC's approach to those opportunities. We'll have a quick update on SPC economic development efforts and planning the region's broadband upgrades.

Policy level review and update of LRP strategies (Fall 2022) Completed

- Work Group Meetings (October- February) Completed
- Meetings with Transit Operators (October-February) Completed
- PPP/Public Meetings (Fall 2022) Completed
- TTC/TOC approval of LRTP project lists (March 2023) Completed
- SPC Conducts the Environmental Justice Analysis (January-April) Completed
- SPC Conducts AQ Conformity (March-April) Completed
- SPC Assembles the LRP Document (March-April) Completed
- 30-day Public Comment Period and Public Involvement (May-June 2023) Completed
- LRP Adoption (June 26, 2023)

Federal Regulations require MPOs to develop and update a Long- Range Transportation Plan. The MPO shall review and update the Long-Range Transportation Plan at least every 4 years in air quality nonattainment areas.

The focus areas for investment are:

- Bridges on the National Highway System (Reconstruction and Preservation)
- Roadways/Freight on the National Highway System (Reconstruction and Preservation)
- Safety on all networks (systematic improvements and specific project locations)
- Roundabouts
- Other Non-NHS Bridges
- Transit Operations and Facilities
- Efficiency and Operations Projects
- Ped/Bike, Multi-Modal, Air Quality programs
- Local/Off System Bridge funds
- Landslide remediation

Mr. D'Andrea remarked that first up are the Highway and Bridge Investments and then I'll touch on the transit investments.

As I mentioned earlier we estimate the amount of funding available for the time period, which for this plan is out to 2050. Then we match the revenue to projects and investment categories based on the detailed work done in the LRTP work groups. This graph shows the investment breakdown by investment category. Bridges continue to receive the highest percentage of the investment at 44% followed by Roadways at 32%. You can see that Safety, Efficiency and operations and SPC Competitive programs

also receive a significant slice of the investment. SPC Competitive programs, which are TA, CMAQ, CRP, and Smart Transportation) account for approximately 9% of the investment. Individual projects are evaluated and selected on a 2-year cycle consistent with our TIP development process.

One of the other key characteristics of the LRTP highway bridge investment is its focus on major corridors. These are all routes on the NHS that performance condition is monitored and reported to our Federal Highway funders. You can see on the map some of the major corridors in every county receiving major investment in this plan.

The LRTP also includes revenue projections, investments and projects on the Transit side. Here's a graph showing the regional investments in transit. Large investment in operating and maintenance, with key transit investments in facilities and vehicles.

As many of you know the Interstate program is managed statewide out of PennDOT Central Office in Harrisburg. The funding and projects we've been discussing up till now doesn't include the major interstate projects. Nonetheless we include the current Interstate Program in the Appendix of the plan. Shown here are the major investments projected in the plan for I-79, I-70, and I-376. We also work with each PennDOT District to put together a list of unfunded interstate needs. Regionwide there is an identified unfunded Interstate need of \$2.2 billion long term.

Other required elements are:

- Population and Employment Forecast
- Transportation Performance Management
- Air Quality Conformity
- Environmental Justice Analysis
- Environmental Inventory and Analysis
- Agency Consultations

Direct/Grassroots Outreach

- Worked directly with many of you to coordinate the locations, type of meeting, and other logistical details.
- Public Participation Panels.
- Proactively asked organizations to post/display our public meeting notices, informational materials, and other materials.
 - Libraries, cultural organizations, community-service providers
- 11 Public Meetings (one meeting for each county, and one for the city).
 - 7 in-person
 - 4 virtual

7. Action on Resolution 5-23 to Adopt the Air Quality Conformity Determination for the LRTP – Dom D'Andrea, Director of Transportation Planning/Chuck Imbrogno, Manager of Models & Data Analytics

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION to make a finding of conformity that the region's fiscally constrained 2050 Transportation Plan (a component of *SmartMoves for a Changing Region*) and the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area (TMA) are consistent with the requirements of the federal Clean Air Act.

WHEREAS, the federal Clean Air Act authorizes the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS), to define the boundaries of areas not in attainment of the Standards, and to establish criteria and procedures for attaining and maintaining the Standards; and

WHEREAS, the EPA requires conformity assessments for three designated nonattainment and maintenance areas in the SPC planning region for the 8-Hour Ozone NAAQS; these include the Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley nonattainment area (comprised of the seven counties: Allegheny, Armstrong, Beaver, Butler, Fayette, Washington, and Westmoreland); the Greene County maintenance area (comprised of Greene

County in its entirety); and the Clearfield-Indiana maintenance area (comprised of Clearfield County, which is outside of SPC's planning area, and Indiana County which is within SPC's planning area); and

WHEREAS, the EPA requires conformity assessments for four designated nonattainment areas in the SPC planning region for the PM 2.5 NAAQS; these include the Liberty-Clairton nonattainment area (comprised of five municipalities within Allegheny County); the Pittsburgh-Beaver Valley nonattainment area (comprised of Beaver, Butler, Washington, and Westmoreland counties in their entirety and portions of Allegheny, Armstrong, Greene, and Lawrence counties); the Allegheny County nonattainment area (comprised of Allegheny County in its entirety); and the Johnstown nonattainment area (comprised of portions of Indiana County within SPC's planning area, and all of Cambria County which is in the planning area of the Johnstown MPO); and

WHEREAS, the EPA requires a conformity assessment for the designated maintenance area in the SPC planning region for the PM 10 NAAQS consisting of five municipalities within Allegheny County; and

WHEREAS, the EPA, in the Transportation Conformity Rule (40 CFR Part 93), provides criteria and procedures to be followed by Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in making conformity determinations regarding transportation plans, programs, and projects within designated nonattainment and maintenance areas; and

WHEREAS, the Transportation Conformity Rule and Sections 174 and 176(c) and (d) of the federal Clean Air Act (Sections 7504 and 7506(c) and (d) of Title 42 USC) require that the MPO not approve any plan, program, or project which does not conform with the Act; and

WHEREAS, the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission (SPC), as the MPO for the Pittsburgh Transportation Management Area, is responsible under Section 134 of Title 23, USC and Section 5303 of Title 49, USC for carrying out a continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive transportation planning process; Section 174 of the federal Clean Air Act designates this same organization as responsible for the transportation-related air quality planning within designated nonattainment and maintenance areas to achieve and maintain NAAQS; and

WHEREAS, SPC staff has conducted a qualitative and quantitative analysis for the designated PM 2.5, PM 10, and 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment and maintenance areas within the SPC region in accordance with the applicable criteria and procedures of the federal Clean Air Act and the Transportation Conformity Rule, and has demonstrated conformity of the 2050 Transportation Plan and the 2023-2026 TIP to the Clean Air Act; and

WHEREAS, the results of the conformity analysis were made available for public review and comment consistent with SPC's established public review procedures from May 11, 2023 through June 9, 2023 including eleven public meetings; responses to all public comments have been compiled and made available to Commission members for review.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission finds that the region's fiscally constrained 2050 Transportation Plan and the 2023-2026 TIP conform to the federal Clean Air Act by supporting its intention of achieving and maintaining the NAAQS; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the region's 2050 Transportation Plan and the 2023-2026 TIP are consistent with the federal Clean Air Act and Transportation Conformity Rule; no goals, directives, recommendations, or projects in the region's Long Range Plan or TIP contradict in a negative manner any specific requirements or commitments of the applicable State Implementation Plan (SIP).

RESOLVED FURTHER that assessment of the designated PM 2.5, PM 10, and 8-Hour Ozone nonattainment and maintenance areas within the SPC region demonstrates that the transportation plans, programs, and projects for those areas conform to the provisions of the federal Clean Air Act and the applicable criteria and procedures of the Transportation Conformity Rule.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 5-23 by Commissioner Vicites which was seconded by Commissioner Junko. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

8. Action on Resolution 6-23 to adopt the LRTP– Dom D’Andrea, Director of Transportation Planning

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION to adopt *SmartMoves for a Changing Region*, the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan.

WHEREAS, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), continues the requirements established in earlier federal legislation, that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) conduct a performance based, continuous, cooperative and comprehensive, transportation planning process that includes developing and maintaining a fiscally-constrained Long Range Transportation Plan (Plan) consistent with federal metropolitan and statewide transportation planning regulations promulgated by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT) and signed into law by the President of the United States on November 15, 2021;

WHEREAS, this Long-Range Transportation Plan utilizes the efforts of the previous 2019 planning process as a basis, and builds upon them to create a holistic, state of the practice plan that will enable the region to collaboratively work together to propel southwestern Pennsylvania into the future. The vision, goals, and strategies were reviewed and revised by SPC Policy Committee, SPC Commissioners, county planners, and the public and incorporated into this plan.

WHEREAS, *SmartMoves for a Changing Region* was developed to satisfy the requirements of federal law and the regulations promulgated by USDOT;

WHEREAS, updated population, household and employment forecasts were prepared by SPC staff to support development of this 2050 Plan and are included as part of the Plan;

WHEREAS, in accordance with the requirements of the Clean Air Act (as amended) and the Transportation Conformity Rule, qualitative and quantitative analysis of the Long-Range Transportation Plan has demonstrated that the Plan conforms to the provisions of the Clean Air Act and the applicable criteria and procedures of the Transportation Conformity Rule, with the resultant conformity finding approved by Commission Resolution 5-23.

WHEREAS, SPC's *Environmental Justice Benefits and Burdens Assessment for the 2050 Plan* report summarizes multiple analyses, outcomes, and activities that have been conducted as part of the region's planning process in accordance with environmental justice;

WHEREAS, SPC released the Long-Range Plan for a 30-day public review and comment in May consistent with SPC's established 30-day public review procedures; the public review period has passed, and public comments on the Plan and responses to them have been presented to the Commission and final revisions to the Plan and associated documents have been recommended; and,

WHEREAS, SPC's Transit Operators Committee and SPC's Transportation Technical Committee unanimously recommend Commission adoption of the Long-Range Plan.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission adopts the ten-county *SmartMoves for a Changing Region* as the region's Long-Range Transportation Plan as required by USDOT.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 6-23 by Commissioner Fabian which was seconded by Commissioner Stauffer. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

9. Action on Resolution 7-23 to adopt Safe Street for All grant application– Josh Spano, Manager, Transportation Operations & Safety

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION (SPC) to endorse SPC staff, in partnership with our region’s planning partners, in applying to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) discretionary grant program. The SS4A provides grants to support planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives on roads and streets involving all users.

WHEREAS, it is critical for southwestern Pennsylvania to prevent roadway deaths and serious injuries and support the National Roadway Safety Strategy and the Department of Transportation’s goal of zero deaths and serious injuries on our nation’s roadways; and,

WHEREAS, in 2020 the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission approved a Regional Transportation Safety Action Plan (SAP) to aid in identifying strategies and project locations to achieve safety goals set forth in *Smart Moves for a Changing Region*; and,

WHEREAS, SPC recognizes that the next step to achieve safer transportation networks is to commit to Vision Zero, the goal of zero traffic deaths or severe injuries among all road users, and to create a Vision Zero Plan which identifies priorities for roadway safety; and

WHEREAS, a detailed Vision Zero Action Plan including design and project priorities for a ten-county region will require more detailed analysis at the county-level, SPC recognizes the value in conducting a pilot study in the county with the highest level of crashes, Allegheny County, which will inform plans in each of our other nine counties with the ultimate goal of an updated, regional Vision Zero Safety Action Plan; and,

WHEREAS, SPC will apply for this pilot study in collaboration with planning partners, including but not limited to Allegheny County, the City of Pittsburgh, and PennDOT, and endeavor to conduct said planning effort with significant public input, and which will address safety concerns in an equitable and data-driven manner; and,

WHEREAS, the funding will enable the region to make strides in lowering crashes, serious and fatal injuries, promoting equal access to transportation infrastructure, cultivating safe and equitable social and economic centers, and improving safety on our region’s transportation network for all roadway users.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission, recognizing its collective interests in a wide-ranging, comprehensive and inclusive approach to improving transportation safety through meaningful collaboration with key regional transportation safety stakeholders and achieving a significant reduction in traffic fatalities and serious injuries, supports SPC staff and its partners in applying to the U.S. Department of Transportation’s SS4A program.

A motion was made to approve Resolution 7-23 by Commissioner Dunn which was seconded by Commissioner Vicites. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

10. Action on Resolution 8-23 to Adopt a Meeting Schedule for FY 2023 – 2024 – Vincent Valdes, Executive Director, President, and CEO

A RESOLUTION OF THE SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA COMMISSION to adopt a Meeting Schedule for 2023-2024.

WHEREAS, the Pennsylvania Sunshine Law Title 65 requires that a Schedule of all Commission and Executive Committee Meetings for the fiscal year be adopted.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission adopts the attached Meeting Schedule.

Southwestern Pennsylvania Commission Meetings

2023	2024
August 28	February 26
October 23	April 22
December 11	June 24

A motion was made to approve Resolution 8-23 by Commissioner Fitzgerald which was seconded by Commissioner Fabian. The affirmative vote was unanimous.

11. Message from the Executive Director – Vincent Valdes, Executive Director, President, and CEO
*Next Meeting Date – **August 28, 2023 at 4 p.m.***

Mr. Valdes commented on the remodel of the SPC offices. He described all the updates including the recently installed light fixtures and the 3-D map of the region in the reception area. He stated that an open house will be scheduled for some time in the fall for the Commissioners to tour the new offices.

12. Other SPC Business

Commissioner Osche stated next meeting is going to be August 28, and we're thinking that that's going to be in Westmoreland or Washington County.

13. Adjourn – 5:17 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Vincent Vicites, Secretary-Treasurer