

Meeting Minutes

Salisbury/Wicomico Metropolitan Planning Organization (“S/WMPO”) Technical Advisory Committee (“TAC”)

September 28, 2021 @ 10:30 AM
Government Office Building
Council Chambers (Room 301)
125 N. Division Street, Salisbury, MD
&
ZOOM hybrid meeting

Attendees:

S/WMPO TAC members:

Tracey Gordy, Chair, Maryland Department of Planning (“MDP”)
Dorothy Morris, Vice Chair, Delaware Office of State Planning Coordination (“DOSPC”)
Tyson Byrne, Maryland Department of Transportation - Proxy (“MDOT”)
Brad Bellacicco, Shore Transit
Eric Berkheimer, Chairman, Salisbury University (“SU”)
Marvina Cephas, Delaware Natural Resources and Environmental Control (“DNREC”)
Tremica Cherry-Wall, Delaware Transit Corporation (“DTC”)
Jenn Cinelli-Miller, Delaware Department of Transportation (“DelDOT”)
Chris Davidson, SBY Airport
Lauren DeVore, Sussex County Planning Department
Keith Hall, Wicomico County Department of Planning, Zoning, and Community Development
Berley Mears, City of Seaford
William Hardin, Town of Delmar
Melinda Stafford, Town of Hebron

Staff:

Adam Gibson, PZCD

Introduction

Chairperson Gordy opened the meeting at approximately 10:30 A.M. and welcomed attendees. Chairperson Gordy asked Mr. Hall to conduct a roll call of members, which a quorum was achieved.

Minutes

The first item of business was approval of the minutes from the July 13, 2021 meeting. Mr. Hardin made a motion to approve the minutes as submitted; seconded by Mr.

Bellacicco. With all participating members voting in favor and none opposed, the motion passed.

Port of Salisbury Study presentation

Kristen Hartpence and Eric Oberhart (CPCS Transcom)

Chairperson Gordy introduced Ms. Laura Soper, City of Salisbury Economic Development Director, as well as Ms. Kristen Hartpence and Mr. Eric Oberhart (CPCS Transcom). Ms. Soper provided an overview of the project's primary purpose, which was to determine the feasibility of adding a multi-user port along the Wicomico River. Also, she thanked the MPO for their financial contribution to the project.

Mr. Oberhart provided a brief overview of the report findings, which included the following:

- Goal being to understand if a multi-user port is economically and physically feasible;
- Existing Port of Salisbury businesses and waterborne commodities;
- SWOT Analysis: Strength = existing facilities and geographic location; Weaknesses = ongoing dredging required, limited vessel size; Opportunities = growth in existing cargoes, relocation of some existing facilities, creating room for shipyard expansion, and increased federal infrastructure funding; and Threats = declining tonnage, future development at nearby ports, and inability to recoup development investment;
- Potential benefits included enable growth of existing businesses, preserve cost-effective supply chains, preserve activity and employment in other water-related businesses;
- Create support initiatives: Policies, Partnerships, Programs, and Projects;
- Create a Port Authority potential structure and possible revenue sources;
- Design of a multi-user port facility and estimated cost;
 - \$22.8 million in infrastructure; and
 - \$271,000 annual operating cost.

After a brief Q&A session, Chairperson Gordy thanked the project team for their presentation.

Shore Transit Choice Ridership Study presentation

Dr. Memo Diriker (BEACON)

Chairperson Gordy welcomed Dr. Memo Diriker and asked for him to present the findings of the Shore Choice Ridership Study. Dr. Diriker began the presentation with stating the purpose of the study, which was to identify ways Shore Transit may increase ridership for persons with vehicles.

He proceeded with an informal overview of the following findings for the Study:

- Challenges with attracting ridership – college students within close proximity to a campus, slow adoption of technology and a flat fee structure;
- Successes in serving portions of the region’s elderly population, door-to-door destinations for ADA riders, affordability and variety to transfer routes;
- Successful strategies deployed by similar sized transit systems and survey results to gauge the attractiveness of recommendations (e.g. automated fair collection apps, wi-fi, bike racks on buses, passenger shelters, etc.);
- Recommendations:
 - Technology upgrades;
 - Bus attributes (cleanliness, targeted destinations); and
 - Increased targeted marketing.
- Availability of personal vehicles, ample parking, and lack of traffic congestion are significant barriers to increasing choice ridership.

After a brief Q&A session, Chairperson Gordy thanked Dr. Diriker for the presentation.

2019 Long Range Transportation Plan (Connect 2050), Appendix F – Proposed Amendments

Keith Hall (S/WMPO)

Chairperson Gordy asked Mr. Hall to present the draft amendments to the 2019 Long Range Transportation Plan (“LRTP”) – Appendix F. Mr. Hall stated the proposed amendments include removing City of Salisbury, DelDOT and Wicomico County existing projects within the System Preservation – Roadway, Bicycle / Pedestrian, and Freight sections in which funding did not extend past FY 2021; revising the Cost and Available Project funds section for several DelDOT projects; and added three new line items in the System Preservation – Transit Section for DART. He added these revisions are necessary to ensure consistency between the LRTP and the Organization’s Transportation Improvement Program and no public comments were received during the review period.

A motion was made by Mr. Bellacicco to forward a favorable recommendation on the draft amendments to the 2019 Long Range Transportation Plan to the S/WMPO Council for review and action; seconded by Mr. Hardin. With all participating members voting in favor and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

FY 2022 – FY 2025 Transportation Improvement Program Draft

Keith Hall (S/WMPO)

Chairperson Gordy asked Mr. Hall to present the draft FY 2022 – FY 2025 Transportation Improvement Program (“TIP”). Mr. Hall started the presentation with an overview about the purpose of the TIP, which is a planning-level budget for state DOT infrastructure projects and transit buses that are federally funded and located within the MPO’s Urbanized Area.

The highlights of the presentation included:

- Estimated spend over the four-year period is \$127,192,400.00, which the MD and DE portions account for approximately 70 and 30 percent, respectively;
- Estimated combined spend by project type:
 - Roads = \$73.3 million;
 - Bridges and Dams = \$5.1 million; and
 - Transit = \$48.8 million.
- Source data provided by the DOT's STIP and consistent with capital plans.

Mr. Hall added no public comments were received.

A motion was made by Ms. Cinelli-Miller to forward a favorable recommendation on the draft FY 2022 – FY 2025 TIP to the S/WMPO Council for review and action; seconded by Mr. Hardin. With all participating members voting in favor and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program – Proposed Amendments

Keith Hall (S/WMPO)

Chairperson Gordy asked Mr. Hall to present the proposed amendments to the adopted FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (“UPWP”). Mr. Hall stated the purpose of this agenda item is to incorporate unused / unobligated funds from the previous fiscal year into the FY 2022 UPWP.

The highlights of the presentation included:

- \$587,396.79 of unused / unobligated funding from FY 2021 UPWP;
 - Core Planning – increase of \$194,000.00;
 - MPO Administration – increase of \$87,000.00;
 - Special Studies – increase of \$306,396.79
- If approved, total revised FY 22 UPWP = \$801,857.07;

Mr. Hall added no public comments were received.

A motion was made by Mr. Byrne to forward a favorable recommendation on the proposed amendments to the adopted FY 2022 UPWP for S/WMPO Council review and action; seconded by Ms. Cinelli-Miller. With all participating members voting in favor and none opposed, the motion passed unanimously.

Member Updates / Other Business

Ms. Cinelli-Miller shared DeIDOT is updating their non-metropolitan planning process.

Mr. Byrne stated MDOT is working on their non-metropolitan planning consultation process, conducting tour meetings for their proposed Consolidated Transportation Program, and the State Transportation Improvement Program is being advertised for public review and comment.

Mr. Bellacicco informed TAC membership that Shore Transit is operating at a reduced level due to driver and bus shortages. Ridership is starting to slowly rebound and it's anticipated that trend will continue.

Mr. Hall stated an e-mail containing information about the upcoming DelDOT and MDOT capital plan public meetings will be sent to the TAC membership. Also, Request for Proposals for the U.S. Route 13 Business Pedestrian and Cyclist Safety and Connectivity Study, as well as the Southwest Sussex County Bike Network Master Plan are ready to be advertised.

Chairperson Gordy stated Maryland government recognizes October as Walking Month and several walking-related events and webinars have been scheduled, which this information will be shared with MPO membership via e-mail.

Next Meeting Date/Adjourn

There being no other business before the TAC, upon a motion by Mr. Hardin, seconded by Mr. Bellacicco, with all participating TAC members voting in favor and none opposed, the meeting was adjourned at 11:50 A.M.