



CITIZENS ADVISORY MEETING

January 12, 2023

This meeting was held virtually at
<https://morgantownmonongaliampo.my.webex.com/meet/baustin>

Members Present:

Christiaan Abildso (Chair), Chip Wamsley, Tom Zeni, Kelli LaNeve, Matt Cross

Others Present: Bill Austin, Jing Zhang

1. Call to Order

The CAC meeting was held virtually and in person. The phone number and web address to access the teleconference were publicized.

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

2. Approval of Minutes

Mr. Austin noted that the minutes of the last meeting were included in the agenda package. Mr. Cross moved to approve the meeting minutes; seconded by Mr. Zeni. With no discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

3. Draft On-Call Consultant RFQ

Mr. Austin noted that the draft on call consultant RFQ is included in the agenda package.

Mr. Austin noted that some interested parties expressed concerns with the structure of previously released RFQ. MPO decided to end that solicitation and reopen the RFQ with modifications. The modified RFQ separates the cost element from the requirement of the RFQ and provides that MPO Staff can only review the cost information under consideration after the firm or firms are selected as on call consultants.

Mr. Abildso asked about the cost element. Mr. Austin noted that it is mainly the hourly rates of consultant.

Mr. Abildso moved to recommend approval of the RFQ to the MPO's Policy Board; seconded by Mr. Cross. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

4. Draft Downtown Micro-Simulation Study RFQ

Mr. Austin noted that the Downtown Traffic Simulation Study RFQ was included in the agenda packet. Mr. Austin noted that the study will address numerous recommendations from the MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan, including potentially closing Grumbein's Island, upgrading and/or relocating Willey Street, improving University Avenue, and evaluating the one-way street pairs in downtown. Other issues the Study can assist in addressing include pedestrian safety and parking.

Mr. Austin noted that in working with WVDOH, the MPO has identified that the Downtown Traffic Simulation Study will be funded utilizing a portion of the MPO's designated Surface Transportation Block Grant funding. The WV DOH will be the lead agency in contracting the study and the MPO will be managing its development.

Mr. Austin noted that the WV DOH has prequalified a number of consulting firms for transportation projects and studies. The WV DOH will inform the short-listed firms about the study and the steering committee selects a consultant from them. The RFQ will be used as the basis for the scope of work in negotiating with the consultant.

Mr. Cross asked when the study will be finished. Mr. Austin noted that the study length is from 18 months to 24 months.

Mr. Cross asked about the closure of Willey St as noted in the RFQ. Mr. Austin noted that it is a misstatement. It should be reconstruction of Willey St rather than closure of Willey St. Mr. Austin noted that the MPO staff will make the correction before sending the draft to the Policy Board.

Mr. Abildso noted freight traffic is a big issue in the downtown area and expressed his hope that the study can address the freight rerouting alternative.

Mr. Cross asked if Greenbag will be included in the simulation. Mr. Austin noted that Greenbag Rd is not included in scope of the project. The Greenbag rerouting can be analyzed by the MPO's travel demand model which could provide data for the downtown similar model.

Mr. Abildso suggested using the crash data from the past 10 years and adding a section of document review in the scope of work, including adopted pedestrian and bicycle plans.

Mr. Abildso moved to recommend approval of the RFQ to the MPO's Policy Board; seconded by Mr. Cross. With no further discussion, the motion passed unanimously.

5. Draft FY 2023-2024 Unified Planning Work Program

Mr. Austin noted that the draft 2023 Unified Planning Work Program was enclosed in the agenda package. The UPWP includes oversight of the Downtown Traffic Study, oversight of the Greenbag Road Design Study, initial implementation of the pedestrian/cyclist data collection initiative, and normal MPO operations including enhanced outreach. MPO Staff also intends to perform an areawide charging station study. The draft UPWP proposes a 4% cost of living increase for primary MPO Staff along with enhanced pay for the MPO's shared employee upon completion of her probationary period.

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO's new employee started working part time this week. She will become a full-time employee in May. The position is shared with the Monongalia County Planning Commission.

This item requires no action from the committee at this meeting.

6. Other Business

Mr. Austin noted that the MPO has got the confirmation from the WV Secretary of Transportation about the funding of three projects in the MPO area. They are the Greenbag Rd Design project, the Downtown

Traffic Simulation Study, and the intersection improvement at the Don Knotts Blvd and Smithtown Rd. Carbon reduction suballocation funds will be used for the Don Knotts Blvd/Smithtown Rd intersection.

Mr. Austin noted that the DOH has cancelled the construction phase of the roundabout project at the University Ave and Collins Ferry Rd due to the prolonged right-of-way phase. The DOH still has the funding for this project and will re-bid the project.

Mrs. LaNeve noted that the Mountain is trying to solve issue on transferring CMAQ funds.

Mr. Cross asked if there is a map for Campus Connector project. Mr. Austin noted the MPO is not aware of any such map. The project is led by the University and design team has not put out any map for public review yet.

Mr. Cross noted that he observed several changes in the traffic light duration on Patteson Dr and Mon Blvd. He expressed his appreciation for the effort and hope the changes can improve the traffic safety and flow along those corridors.

Mr. Cross suggested providing two-lane turning right onto Mon Blvd from Patterson at the intersection of Mon Blvd and Patteson Dr. This change could minimize weaving movement on Patterson.

10. Meeting Adjournment

The Meeting adjourned at 6:49 PM