

TRANSPORTATION PROJECTS SUBCOMMITTEE

MEETING SUMMARY

Wednesday, July 22, 2009
9:00 A.M. in the GBNRTC Conference Room

Attendees: K. O'Brien, T. Trabold, H. Morse, P. Zakrzewski, N. Peters, R. O'Connor, S. Piccirillo, P. Merlo, T. DeSantis, J. Bidell, G. Gottlieb, G. Witulski, and J. Buffamonte. *Stakeholders:* M. Leydecker. *Public:* C. Bright

1. Approval of June 17, 2009 TPS Meeting Summary – *Motion for approval: Zakrzewski/Merlo. Approved.*
2. NYS Department of Labor Representative – Carolyn Bright of the NYS Department of Labor explained the agency's interest and involvement in linking people with stimulus-created work opportunities. She provided materials on a variety of topics including job-posting requirements of all ARRA-created jobs on the NYS Job Bank.
3. 2008-2012 TIP – TPS Action Requests
 - a. PIN 5758.89: South Park [Bailey Ave to City Line] – J. Bidell described the handout as an updated IPP for the subject project that now incorporates a portion of the ARRA TEP funding and associated work previously to be advanced as part of the Beautification, Connection and Waterway Enhancement Project. The scope and cost changes will allow the stimulus funds to be expedited more quickly. *Motion to approve scope and cost changes as proposed: Zakrzewski/Merlo. Approved.*
4. TPS Discussion Topics
 - a. TPS Subcommittee Operational Plan: Guideline Thresholds for TIP Actions – T. Trabold reviewed the third draft of proposed revisions to the TIP amendment change controls. Members agreed with G. Gottlieb's suggestion to change the 'or' to 'and' in *Change Type I.(a)*. *Motion to recommend approval to PCC as amended: Merlo/Gottlieb. H. Morse to investigate if item should be presented to Policy Committee at their 7/28/09 scheduled meeting.*
 - b. 2011-2015 TIP Development – T. Trabold noted three events underway: a review of potential long-range plan projects, an assessment of roll-over projects from the current TIP and a review of all projects classified as non-exempt for air quality conformity. G. Gottlieb noted revised regional financial allocations were expected to be worse than previously assumed. Members agreed to assess the viability of their projects, determine if cost estimates were still appropriate or needed adjusting, and in the absence of any new funding guidance, to use last year's allocations as a starting point.
5. Status 2009 ARRA/Stimulus Program (*items a-h*) – T. Trabold distributed a handout noting the status of all ARRA projects as of July 20, 2009. Members engaged in a discussion of how to handle bids larger than engineering estimates, as well as bids that come in lower than engineering estimates. NYSDOT stated they would have a clearer picture of the funding status/availability in the next two weeks. It was agreed that 1) the \$77M regional total would remain the Region 5 programming target, 2) the first priority would be to fully fund ARRA projects from this initial round, and 3) members would revisit their illustrative and existing TIP project lists for readiness and therefore potential financing should additional ARRA funds become available. Each member then discussed the status of every stimulus-funded project they had underway at this point. The Thruway Authority noted did not expect certification of its one ARRA project (\$2.5M) and therefore was advancing it with non-ARRA funds.
6. Old Business
 - a. ARRA Discretionary Grant Program – H. Morse reviewed a list of potential submissions the staff was aware of and noted a webinar was scheduled for that afternoon on the TIGER program. A handout was distributed noting the Governor was intending to send a letter of support with every TIGER application from NYS.
7. New Business
 - a. Williamsville Toll Booth Relocation/AQ Impacts – H. Morse explained a new regional air quality conformity determination would be required to test the impacts of a relocated toll barrier and toll removal at exit 49. All non-exempt projects would be reviewed during the process to check on any design refinements that may not be properly represented in the model.
 - b. 2009 Pending Rescissions – H. Morse noted that Congress had not yet addressed a pending funding shortfall that would rescind \$400M from NYS after Sept 30. G. Gottlieb added there was not a sufficient amount of unobligated funds to cover this so it could directly impact currently funded projects.
 - c. Commuter Rail Feasibility Study (*new agenda item*) – T. DeSantis noted Mayor Dyster's desire for a commuter rail study to assess the potential of such service between Buffalo and Niagara Falls. Item to be discussed with NYS rail department personnel.
8. Next Meeting – Subcommittee confirmed the next TPS meeting for Wednesday August 19, 2009, 9 a.m. at GBNRTC. *Motion to adjourn: Merlo/Zakrzewski. Approved.*