

MINUTES
COLUMBUS AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (CAMPO)
POLICY BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2025 AT 1:30 P.M.
COUNCIL CHAMBERS, COLUMBUS CITY HALL
COLUMBUS, INDIANA

Members Present:

Tom Finke, Chair (Barth. County Plan Commission)
Dennis Baute, (City of Columbus Plan Commission)
Mary Ferdon (Mayor of Columbus)
Tom Dell (City of Columbus City Council)
Tony London (Barth. County Commissioners)
Kim Bennett (Barth. County Council)
Becky Packer (INDOT)

Staff Present:

Ashley Beckort (CAMPO Manager)
Danny Hollander (County Engineer)
Andrew Beckort (City Engineer)
Austin Whitted (Attorney)
Jessie Boshell (Bike-Ped Coordinator, Planning)

Mr. Finke opened the meeting with the roll call.

ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Ms. Beckort explained that the CAMPO Bylaws require the election of a Chair (currently Mr. Finke) and Vice-chair (currently Mr. Baute). Mr. Dell moved to keep the current slate of officers. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bennett, motion carried 7-0.

MINUTES

Mr. Finke called for any additions, corrections, or a motion to approve the minutes of the October 23rd 2024 meeting. Mr. London moved to approve the minutes as presented. The motion was seconded by Mr. Baute and carried by a vote of 7-0.

REPORTS

Project Update: City Engineer – Mr. Beckort reported that at the end of 2024, the City was awarded about 2 million dollars in HSIP funds for two projects, and the City is in the middle of consultant selection. Ms. Ferdon asked for clarity on what HSIP stands for to help Ms. Bennett as the new Board member. Mr. Beckort explained that it is Highway Safety funds at 90/20 funding split. Mr. Finke asked if anyone else had questions for Mr. Beckort. Mr. London had a question about the timing of the Lowell Road project east of the bridge. Mr. Beckort indicated that it was not built yet due to utilities in the way but planned to be constructed this spring.

Project Update: County Engineer – Mr. Hollander reported on the update to the Lowell Road project west of the overpass bridge. All right-of-way has been acquired. Later in this meeting, they would be asking to amend the project year for the road because the bridge needs to be built first per DNR regulations. Stage 1 plans were recently submitted to INDOT for approval. Mr. London had a clarification on the timing of the bridge and round-about. Mr. Hollander indicated they are kin together and planned to be built together.

MPO Director's Report – Ms. Beckort introduced Patrick Carpenter from FHWA and Andy Rush from KIPDA. Ms. Beckort described the TIP Administrative Modifications and Emergency Votes report. This report will be provided at each meeting to list out the changes since the last Policy Board meeting for the Board and public to review. Mr. Baute indicated he was appreciative of the new format.

OLD BUSINESS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION

None.

NEW BUSINESS REQUIRING BOARD ACTION

Resolution 2025-01: Amendment to the 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP)

Ms. Beckort explained a break-down of CAMPO funds including the two pots of money, planning dollars and construction funds. Planning dollars which are regulated by the UPWP (Unified Planning Work Program) or work plan and are used for operating budget and special studies. The MTP (Metropolitan Transportation Plan) or the long-range plan indicates what transportation projects need funding. This document is updated every 5-years; the planned update will be under contract later this year and finalized summer of 2026. Then the TIP (Transportation Improvement Program) is how those construction funds are allocated each fiscal year. Projects cannot be in the TIP if they are not in the MTP. The MTP has many pieces including demographic information, previous projects, and priority projects. The proposed change was to amend the MTP to add two projects to the priority projects list: (1) a traffic light at Bear Lane and US 31, and (2) improvements to County Road 350 West from SR 46 to Goeller Road. Ms. Beckort further explained the provided memo describing project details and justification.

Mr. Baute asked a question about the shared-use path on CR 350 West and whether there was available space. Mr. Beckort indicated that it has been a part of the project, and utilities would need to be relocated.

Mr. London inquired if CR 350 West was both a City and County road. Mr. Baute shared concerns about the property that was not annexed and is an island of County. Mr. Dell indicated that those in the City comes down to if they wanted to be annexed. Mr. Beckort indicated that the City and County typically enter into a interlocal agreement to address funds.

Following the discussion, Mr. Finke called for a motion. Mr. London moved to approve Resolution 2025-01. Mr. Dell seconded the motion, and it passed by a vote of 7-0.

Resolution 2025-02: Amendments to the FY 2024-28 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ms. Beckort explained the provided memo describing the proposed TIP amendments, which were seven changes including 4 INDOT projects, altering the year and costs for the existing Lowell Road and Talley Road projects, and adding a new project of the traffic light at Bear Lane and US 31. Ms. Beckort explained the pro and cons of allocating funds to the Bear Lane project. 2026 funds are available but this project is on a quick timeline. If the project were not to move forward, CAMPO would need to try and trade funds or flex it to transit as these funds are use-or-loose.

Mr. Baute inquired of what the Bear Lane project was for. Mr. London explained it was for the Kings Hawaiian project. He indicated that the County tried to pay for it locally, but needs more funds. Mr. London further explained the benefit of the project.

Ms. Bennett inquired what could be the hold-up on Bear Lane. Mr. Hollander indicated that the environmental reviews and right-of-way steps may effect deadlines. Ms. Bennett followed-up on how difficult it would be to reallocate that funding. Ms. Beckort explained that the funds could be traded with another Indiana MPO, but that is dependent on their interest and availability to trade. Further, we could flex the funds, but we don't typically flex that much. Mr. London clarified Ms. Bennett's question that if we don't use it, do we lose it. The other Board members agreed that would be the case. Mr. Hollander indicated he is betting they can get it done as the County is covering the environmental step to help it move quicker.

Mr. London asked for clarity on item #4. Ms. Packer clarified that the poles were there and this adds the turn lanes. The trucks should go there and shouldn't be going through the mall.

Following additional discussion, Mr. Finke called for a motion. Ms. Ferdon moved to approve Resolution 2025-02. Mr. London seconded the motion, and it passed by a vote of 7-0.

Resolution 2025-03: Release Draft FY 2026-30 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for Public Comment Period

Ms. Beckort walked through the provided memo describing the project timeline, and then walked through the draft TIP document, paying specific regard to changes in modification criteria. Ms. Beckort noted that many of the criteria changes will also require bylaw amendments which will be presented at the May meeting. Ms. Beckort further explained that this is the first step in the review of the draft TIP; the next step is opening the public comment period which includes an open house in April; and the Policy Board will have additional time to comment on any desired changes.

Mr. Finke asked the status of the funding contract with INDOT. Ms. Beckort explained that the last status update was that they were comfortable with the agreement but were verifying funding availability and funds are not currently available. Thus, that agreement is paused. Mr. Finke indicated it would be nice to be able to bank up funds over many years. Ms. Beckort also indicated that CAMPO typically gets 2.5 million every fiscal year based on our population and many years a project is larger than that allocation so the City or County must cover the remainder of the cost.

Following the discussion, Mr. Finke called for a motion. Ms. Ferdon moved to approve Resolution 2025-03. Mr. London seconded the motion, and it passed by a vote of 7-0.

Ms. Ferdon left the meeting.

Resolution 2025-04: Amendment to CY 2025-2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Ms. Beckort explained the provided memo describing the proposed amendment to the UPWP, which include updating the estimated 2024 funds carry-over based on finalized 2024 costs, revisions to the MPA map (adding labels for clarity), and updates to 2026 estimates based on new allocation data from INDOT.

Mr. London asked for Ms. Beckort to explain the colors of the MPA map for Ms. Bennett. Ms. Beckort explained the limits of the Corporate Boundary (blue), Urbanized Area (yellow) – what determines population for funding allocation, and Bartholomew County being the MPA (the Metropolitan Planning Area) while the group over it is the MPO (Metropolitan Planning Organization). Mr. London asked whether projects could be outside the Urbanized Area (UA). Ms. Beckort indicated they can be. When applying for funding it typically asks if the project is in the UA, which gets you more points. Ms. Beckort then explained the area in Edinburgh has partial jurisdiction for CAMPO and the Indianapolis MPO per an Interlocal Agreement.

Following the discussion, Mr. Finke called for a motion. Mr. London moved to approve Resolution 2025-4. Mr. Dell seconded the motion, and it passed by a vote of 6-0.

DISCUSSION ITEMS

2025 Meeting Schedule – Ms. Beckort explained the memo provided discussing the project of mapping out the meetings for the last five years and what the meeting topics were. Ms. Beckort also researched project deadlines, specially the UPWP. With that research, the proposal was to shift the typical meeting in August to September. Therefore, meetings would be February, May, September, and November. Ms. Beckort asked the Board to formally approve the meeting dates for the record. Mr. Finke called for a motion. Mr. Baute moved to approve the meeting dates. Mr. London seconded the motion, and it passed by a vote of 6-0.

Conflict of Interest Form – Mr. Whitted walked through the 2025 Conflict of Interest Form for the Policy Board members. Ms. Bennett asked a clarification question regarding the company she works at having contracts with the City and County. Mr Whitted explained the form was intended for personal holdings not an employer's holdings. Further, if anyone had any more questions, he would be around after the meeting for additional discussion. Policy Board members filled out the forms and turned them into Mr. Whitted.

Passenger Rail from Louisville to Indianapolis – Andy Rush from Kentuckiana Regional Planning and Development Agency (KIPDA) presented to the Policy Board on a project regarding a passenger rail from Louisville to Indianapolis. KIPDA received a grant from the Federal Railroad Administration to facilitate this project. Mr. Rush indicated the goal is for said train to be car-competitive. The Policy Board discussed the old rail road line through Bartholomew County and their experiences with high-speed rail. Mr. Rush explained that the project includes 3 steps: 1-Scoping (no local match), 2-Service Development Plan (10% non-federal match), and Preliminary Engineering (20% non-federal match). KIPDA recently finished Step 1. Mr. London asked if the budget is for the planning or the construction. Mr. Rush indicated that Step 2 is the planning while Step 3 is the construction costs (Preliminary Engineering and Environmental Review). Mr. Rush indicated that a subsidy may be needed to help pay for maintaining the route in the future, but much of that is to be determined. Mr. London asked how much Step 2 would be. Mr. Rush indicated the cost estimated is \$4.9 million over 27 months. Mr. Rush indicated that KIPDA is not asking for money at this time. Mr. London said he recalled the railroad improvements done recently in Bartholomew County to improve the rail line; he inquired how that was related to passenger rail. Mr. Rush indicated that there are different tiers of lines and some have trackage rights which allow another railroad to run on their line. Mr. Rush thanked the Policy Board for their time and indicated he may be back next year with another update.

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Two members of the public spoke in support of the passenger rail project.

ADJOURNMENT: 3:18 p.m.

Mr. Baute moved to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Mr. London and approved by a vote of 6-0.

These minutes approved at the Policy Board meeting on _____.

Tom R. Finke, Chair

Attest: Ashley E. Beckort, CAMPO Manager