



**Transportation Advisory Committee Meeting
September 15, 2022
ODOT District 11 Office – New Philadelphia, OH**

Meeting was called to order at 10:00 a.m. Chairman Mr. Tom Konst asked attendees to introduce themselves.

Mr. Max Crown motioned to approve the minutes. Mr. Chris Young seconded the motion.

Mr. Josh Sliker introduced Mr. Jeremy Thompson, ODOT Traffic Safety Engineer, who served as guest speaker. Thompson thanked the group for hosting him and addressed crash trends that have been observed across the state, as well as funding opportunities moving forward. Over the past decade, a significant increase in traffic deaths has been recorded. Although fatalities have been on the rise, serious injuries incurred during crashes have declined. While deaths on state-maintained roads have declined, deaths on local roads have risen over the past five years.

Mr. Thompson noted that about one third of roadway departures involve an inebriated driver or a driver who is not wearing a seatbelt and/or a driver who is speeding or under the age of 25. While safety program funding was a challenge last year, there is additional funding available this year as a result of the bipartisan infrastructure bill. In the state of Ohio, a portion of the gas tax has been dedicated to the safety program. Thompson went on to remind the group that applicants should be coordinating with their respective ODOT district at least six weeks in advance.

Thompson indicated that there are three types of safety applications: (1) formal (2) systemic, and (3) abbreviated

Under formal project applications, all public roadway projects are eligible for funding and all phases of a project are eligible. Ten percent local match is required. Projects are also eligible based on historical crash data; with a minimum of three crashes per year considered. A complete safety study is also required prior to submittal. Applications are due every year on August 31 and applicants then present on their individual projects through the month of September at the central office. A second opportunity will now be available in the Spring and up to \$5 million per project is awarded. Project examples include intersection reconfigurations, roundabouts, and interchange upgrades.

The systemic application was just introduced last year and has only been completed for one round. Rather than taking crash data into account, the systemic program looks at

roadway characteristics. Crash prevention is the key component to this program. Applications are due on January 31 and do not require presentations. These projects can be funded for up to \$5 million (all phases are eligible), as well. Roadway departure and pedestrian crashes are a key focus of this program. ODOT has also funded lane repurposing through this program for traffic calming metrics.

The final application type that Thompson covered was for the Abbreviated or Rapid Implementation program. Much like the two aforementioned applications, a ten percent local match is required. Funding is only available for design and construction through the program. Projects are eligible based upon historical crash data or roadway characteristics present at the project location. Applications can be submitted at any time and are reviewed quarterly in March, June, September, and December. Projects can be up to \$500,000 and should require no right of way acquisition work. Work should be completed within 2 years of funding award. Example projects include signage updates, pavement markings, and localized crossing improvements.

Thompson also mentioned that these safety programs may also be used in partnership with TAP, Safe Routes to School and Small Cities programs

Mr. Sliker thanked Mr. Thompson for serving as speaker and moved on to discuss the crash summary data for 2017 to 2021. The data included fatal, serious, minor, and possible injury crashes for each county, as well as pedestrian, bicycle, and buggy crash data. Sliker then reviewed the performance goal measure, which is a one percent reduction of fatal and serious injury crashes annually. Fatalities have been increasing, but serious injury crashes are declining.

Meeting attendees noted concerns about reporting of crashes and how best to report property damage.

Mr. Josey Rabare reviewed crash data for each individual county with meeting attendees. Attendees were updated as to which roads in each of the eight OMEGA RTPO counties had significant crash data reported. Maps for each county were posted to the OMEGA website following the meeting. Mr. Fred Wachtel asked if a full crash summary with crash causes included could be shared with meeting attendees, as well. Mr. Sliker noted that he could share that information.

Ms. Jeannette Wierzbicki, P.E. noted that OMEGA had conducted a local road safety plan in 2021, which is available on the OMEGA website.

Mr. Sliker also updated attendees regarding the RTPO Capital Allocation Program. All funding has been awarded and funding for the following projects has been encumbered by ODOT:

- Coshocton CR 12 Buggy Lane
- Newcomerstown Miskimen Sidewalks

- New Philadelphia Bike/Ped Connectivity Project
- Tuscarawas Towpath Extension
- Tuscarawas CR 62 Bridge Replacement

During the past year, Sliker reported that the following major activities were completed:

- Implemented the RTPO Capital Allocation Program
- Prepared School Travel Plans for Salem City and Ridgewood Local Schools Districts and updated the School Travel Plan for Cambridge City School District
- Prepared one TAP application for the Coshocton CR 621 Multi-Use Path which was approved.
- Prepared five SRTS applications, three of which were approved
- Completed traffic counts for Fairfield Township in Columbiana County and numerous townships for the township stimulus program
- Prepared 79 applications for the township stimulus program, two of which were approved.
- Prepared township safety sign applications for two townships and provided each township with a GIS map and spreadsheet for sign location and type
- Updated crash data for each county and conducted three site specific crash analyses.

Mr. Sliker also mentioned that OMEGA will be issuing a request for projects for inclusion in the Long-Range Transportation Plan. Projects in the Long-Range Transportation may be eligible for the RTPO Capital Allocation Program should that program be reauthorized as well as other for other state and federal funding programs. Sliker also demonstrated the use of the Project Profile Form which will be used to submit projects to OMEGA.

Under announcements, the OMEGA Semi-Annual Membership Meeting will be held at the Millersburg Brewing Company on September 20, 2022. TAP Letters of Interest are due on October 31, 2022. The Reconnecting Communities Application is due October 13th, and the Railroad Crossing Elimination Application is due on October 4th. OMEGA will host Rural Consultations Meetings on October 11 and October 13.

Under other business, Mr. Fred Wachtel, P.E., P.S. provided an update on the state committee that is assessing alternatives for motor vehicle user fees. Wachtel is a member of this committee and discussed several alternatives being considered such as fees based on miles traveled.

Mr. Konst adjourned the meeting at 11:22 AM. Next meeting is on November 17, 2022 at 10:00 a.m.