



RIC Messenger

Boone, Clay, Kanawha, Putnam Counties

A publication of the B-C-K-P Regional Intergovernmental Council

Fall 2023

Chairman Casebolt's Message



Happy fall! I hope everyone looks forward to cooler weather in the fall season. I want to welcome RIC's new Executive Director, Tyler Ferrell. Tyler brings a wealth of knowledge about community development and regional councils, enabling him to step right in and hit the ground running. We look forward to working with Tyler and seeing all he has to offer RIC in the coming years.

The RIC staff continues to be tremendously busy as they work throughout our region on numerous projects. I want to take this opportunity to provide an update on RIC projects over the past few months.

Transportation News - The RIC Transportation Team assisted Putnam County Schools with interpreting the school board's attendance zone policy and created printed and digital **Attendance Zone Boundaries Maps** for the school system to assist residents and realtors with understanding their county's school zone boundaries. The RIC Transportation Team has been working to assist the West Virginia Department of Transportation's Safety Advancement Team with their public involvement efforts for a Kanawha County **Vulnerable Road User Assessment Open House** and statewide general survey. The assessment is a study to determine the safety needs and possible solutions for bicyclists and pedestrians statewide. In addition, the RIC Transportation Team has started its efforts to implement the recently adopted **Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP)** by conducting a formal RFQ process to select consultants and scope for safety studies in high crash and high-risk areas for all road users. The team is looking forward to kicking off their work at the intersections of Mount Vernon Road & WV Route 34 in Putnam County and Lee Street & Leon Sullivan Way, along with the Washington Street East Corridor from Leon Sullivan Way to Ruffner Avenue in Kanawha County. Furthermore, the RIC Transportation Team has implemented the recently adopted suballocated funding guidelines and made the **Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG) suballocated funding** available to its member municipalities. The team continues to strategize ways to leverage the funding to maximize our region's use of federal dollars, leading to Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) implementation and improving highway performance measures.

Community Development News - The RIC Community Development Team secured \$962,000 in local share funding from the WV Governor's Office to **provide energy-efficient lighting and solar power** to the **West Virginia Regional Tech Park** and the **Capitol Market**; these two entities received Congressional Directed Spending through the FY 2022 and 2023 federal budgets. The two non-profits have requested that RIC be the administrator for their improvements. The RIC Community Development Team also worked with the Putnam County Commission to successfully bid and award the **Jim Ridge Phase II Waterline Extension** to Chojnacki Construction of Hamlin, WV. Construction began in August; this project costs \$3,865,000 and will serve fifty-four residences. In addition, the RIC Community Development Team, working with the Town of Clay, accepted bids for the **Town of Clay Wastewater Facility Rehabilitation Project**. The project was over the bid estimate by \$1,440,700.00. RIC assisted the Town of Clay in acquiring additional funds from the West Virginia Department of Economic Development through a US Housing and Urban Development Disaster Recovery Economic Development Grant to make the project viable. The funding for the project should close by October 2023 and be awarded then. Furthermore, the RIC Community Development Team has been assisting member governments in filing applications with the West Virginia Infrastructure and Jobs Development Council in anticipation of grant opportunities later in 2023. The applications filed within the last quarter are for the **City of South Charleston Liberty Pump Station Rehabilitation, City of South Charleston Treatment Plant Electrical Improvements, Town of East Bank Sanitary Sewer Rehabilitation, Town of Poca Storm Sewer Project, and the Clay County Public Service District's Grassy Fork and Ossia Road Waterline Extensions**. I want to conclude with a few **stormwater funding projects**. The RIC Community Development Team is working with the Town of Poca to apply for funding for a stormwater project causing trouble for the residents in certain areas of the town. This \$601,300 project is partially funded by the Town of Poca's ARPA funds. In addition, the team is also working with the Town of Buffalo to develop a stormwater project and to establish stormwater utility boards in both entities.

I look forward to seeing everyone at our **December 14, 2023, Quarterly Meeting** as we work together to promote local communities, regional solutions, and statewide impacts.

Dave Casebolt
Chairman



Groundbreaking for Crestwood Drive Waterline Extension.
This \$1.9 million dollar project
will serve 32 families.

Welcome New RIC Board Member

Melissa Smith, Kanawha County Citizen Representative



Congratulations Sam

Sam Richardson has accepted the
position as RIC's new Transporta-
tion Program Manager.



RIC Welcomes New Executive Director Tyler Ferrell

RIC welcomes Tyler Ferrell as new Executive Director. Prior to assuming the Executive Director position at RIC, Tyler served as the Executive Director of the Mo-Kan Regional Council. While at the Mo-Kan Regional Council, Tyler worked with communities on comprehensive plans, zoning ordinance updates, downtown development plans, and transportation plans. Additionally, Tyler worked with communities to secure funding for water/sewer, library, parks, trails, and other community development projects. Tyler holds a master's degree in public administration from Georgia College and State University and a bachelor's degree in wildlife and fisheries resources from West Virginia University. Tyler is a graduate of Oklahoma University's Economic Development Institute and Cornell University's Commercial

Real Estate Program. Tyler brings a wealth of experience, and RIC is very excited to work with him in the coming years to see what new ideas he brings to the council.

Sign-up to Join the RIC Email List

If you would like to receive information about upcoming events and opportunities, sign up to join our email list at <http://eepurl.com/dH-hyj>

RIC Thanks SoJuana Ellis for Serving as Interim Executive Director



Sam Richardson & SoJuana Ellis

RIC would like to thank SoJuana Ellis for her exemplary service as Interim Executive Director. SoJuana's leadership, guidance, and genuine caring nature was instrumental in ensuring the continued success of RIC during the search for a new Executive Director



Future Year Funding Available for Transportation Projects

RIC MPO Suballocated Transportation Project Funding Available for Future Year Obligation

Due to the new transportation Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), also known as the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), federal funding for transportation projects is now available directly through the Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), through the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) and the Surface Transportation Block Grant (STBG). The Metropolitan Planning Organization strives to implement a planning process that is continuing, cooperative, and comprehensive. The RIC Transportation Improvement Program TIP involves a mechanism to obligate future year federal transportation funds. Therefore, the RIC MPO is allowing eligible agencies to submit requests for future year suballocated funding prior to the planned adoption of the new FY 2024-2027 RIC TIP. If your eligible agency has plans to include local match dollars for federally suballocated transportation funds in future year budgets, now is the time to plan. The **deadline** to submit requests for federally suballocated funding from Federal Fiscal Years 2022-2027 is **November 17th, 2023, at 12 PM ET.**

Eligible Projects under the Carbon Reduction Program include “*a transportation alternative* (as defined under the Moving Ahead for Progress under the 21st Century Act [23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29), as in effect on July 5, 2012]), including, but not limited to, the construction, planning, and design of on-road and off-road trail facilities for pedestrians, bicyclists, and other nonmotorized forms of transportation,” and much more.

Eligible Projects under the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program include, “*Transportation alternatives* previously described in 23 U.S.C. 101(a)(29) and in 23 U.S.C. 213 (as in effect on the day before enactment of the FAST Act),” and much more.

The RIC MPO seeks to improve transportation infrastructure throughout the two-county region of Kanawha and Putnam counties through the implementation of projects utilizing these MPO-specific federal suballocated funds. The MPO is responsible for allocating federal suballocated funds from the Surface Transportation Block Grant Program (STBG) and the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) for eligible projects.

The MPO Project Selection Guidelines for Federal Suballocated Funds for RIC serve as a guide for project eligibility and the application process for the purpose of allocating federal suballocated funds for the RIC metropolitan planning area, comprising Kanawha and Putnam counties in West Virginia. These guidelines were adopted by the RIC Policy Board on June 8th, 2023.

Access the current MPO Project Selection Guidelines for Federal Suballocated Funds at: <https://www.wvregion3.org/funding/>

Selected projects must appear in the RIC TIP. The WVDOT has adopted the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Operating Procedures, which can be viewed at: <https://www.wvregion3.org/funding/>

To submit a request for RIC MPO Project Funding, please follow the application instructions at: <https://www.wvregion3.org/funding/>

The **deadline** to submit requests for federally suballocated funding from Federal Fiscal Years 2022-2027 is **November 17th, 2023, at 12 PM ET.**

For pre-application consulting, contact the RIC Transportation Team at (304) 744-4258 or at mail@wvregion3.org. Hard copies or accessibility accommodations for viewing the guidelines or making a submission can be made upon request.

For more information go to our website at www.wvregion3.org and select RIC Funding under the Transportation dropdown menu or enter the following url into your browser: <https://www.wvregion3.org/funding/>



Photo credits: www.pedbikeimages.org / Dan Burden



Jim Ridge Phase II Waterline Extension Ground-breaking

Jim Ridge Phase II Waterline Extension is a \$3.8 million dollar project that will serve 54 families.
**Pictured on the right*



The Putnam PSD Water Plant Upgrade is a \$2.4 million dollar project.
**Pictured above & on the left*



RIC Transportation Team Attends AMPO Conference in Cleveland, OH Fostering Planning Innovation and Collaboration

The recent Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) Conference in Cleveland, OH proved to be an enriching experience for the RIC Transportation Team. From reimagining how RIC presents its core products to the public, such as the long-range Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), to envisioning an expansive future for its mapping and Geographic Information Science (GIS) operations, the conference ignited creativity and provided valuable insights.

AMPO serves as a gathering ground for Metropolitan Planning Organizations from across the United States to exchange their finest planning products, practices, and lessons learned. The RIC Transportation Team not only discovered novel planning products to draw inspiration from, such as the [Transportation Atlas by the Herkimer-Oneida Counties Transportation Council \(HOCTC\)](#), but also gained a deeper understanding of the innovative work RIC has undertaken. This newfound knowledge positions RIC as a potential contributor to national conferences in the future.

The conference also offered a unique opportunity for networking with MPOs nationwide. Attendees were treated to inspiring speeches by Cleveland Mayor Justin Bibb and Lake County Commission President John R. Hamercheck. Additionally, Angie Schmitt, a prominent author based in Cleveland, delivered a thought-provoking keynote address based on her book, *Right of Way: Race, Class, and the Silent Epidemic of Pedestrian Deaths in America*. Schmitt highlighted the concerning trend of rising pedestrian fatalities in the United States and delved into the underlying causes. Schmitt, a recognized expert in sustainable transportation, has contributed her insights to prestigious publications like the New York Times, The Atlantic, and National Public Radio. She emphasized the challenges faced by millions of aging Americans who may no longer drive, yet reside in areas lacking walkability and transit access.



Jake Smith, RIC (left), Angie Schmitt (center), and Sam Richardson, RIC (right)

Angie Schmitt, who has not owned a car for over a decade and arrived at the conference by bicycle, is the founder and principal at 3MPH Planning and Consulting, a consultancy focused on pedestrian safety. The RIC Transportation Team had the opportunity to share details of the recently adopted Comprehensive Safety Action Plan (CSAP) with Schmitt and eagerly anticipates applying the lessons learned from her address to enhance safety in the RIC region.

In summary, the AMPO Conference in Cleveland was a catalyst for fresh perspectives, networking opportunities, and the exchange of innovative ideas. The RIC Transportation Team returned home inspired and prepared to leverage their newfound knowledge for the benefit of RIC and its stakeholders.

Upcoming RIC Meetings

December 14, 2023

March 14, 2024

June 13, 2024

September 12, 2024

December 12, 2024

*All meetings will be held at 12:00 Noon at the West Virginia Regional Technology Park.
We will continue to offer a virtual option as well.*

RIC Transportation Team Assists Putnam County Schools

Mapping a Better Path for School Attendance Zones

Pat Clark, Director of Transportation at Putnam County Schools (PCS), has a demanding role. From handling bus breakdowns and route adjustments to coordinating field trips and budgeting for fuel, his days are packed with responsibilities. However, his daily routine often gets interrupted by phone calls from interested parents or realtors seeking information about school attendance zones. To answer these inquiries, Director Clark had to navigate through multiple outdated and incomplete highway maps, a time-consuming and frustrating task. Recognizing the need for a solution, Director Clark sought a way to streamline this process.

Multiple private firms attempted to accurately depict Putnam County Schools' attendance zone policy but fell short, leaving Director Clark with no clear answers. The problem extended beyond his office, as the administrative team at Putnam County Schools also struggled to manage the high volume of calls, especially in an area with a bustling housing market. Faced with this challenge, Putnam County Schools turned to the Regional Intergovernmental Council (RIC) for planning assistance. Without hesitation, RIC accepted the task.

After careful deliberation and months of diligent work, the RIC Transportation Team embarked on a



Sam Richardson from RIC (right) hands off the large printed mapped display to Director of Transportation at PCS, Pat Clark, (left) in front of a PCS bus.

mission to create a solution that would not repeat the mistakes of previous attempts. They developed a comprehensive mapped display by integrating data from Open Street Map with freshly drawn attendance zone borders. The result was a user-friendly map that allowed Director Clark to pinpoint locations down to the street level and determine the appropriate school zone for each case.

Taking it a step further, the RIC Transportation Team transformed the data into an interactive online map display. Now, parents can easily scroll through an online map with scaled attendance zone boundaries without

the need to contact Putnam County Schools directly. The primary goal was to save Director Clark and the school administration time by reducing the volume of phone calls and the time spent on each inquiry. Simultaneously, this approach aimed to enhance public communication by integrating the policy into a user-friendly web interface.

In summary, the RIC Transportation Team's collaborative effort has not only lightened the load for Director Clark but also provided a valuable resource for parents and realtors in Putnam County. By streamlining the process of understanding school attendance zones, this initiative is a testament to the power of efficient planning and collaboration.

Sign-up to Receive the RIC Newsletter by Email

If you would rather receive the RIC Newsletter by email, please email
Joanna Keller at Joanna@WVRegion3.org

*Regional Intergovernmental Council
315 D Street
South Charleston, WV 25303*



Upcoming RIC Meeting

December 14, 2023 - 12:00 Noon

*Regional Intergovernmental Council
315 D Street, South Charleston, WV 25303
Phone: (304) 744-4258; Fax: (304) 744-2534
Website: www.wvregion3.org · Email: mail@wvregion3.org*

*Chairman: Dave Casebolt
Executive Director: Tyler Ferrell*

Newsletter prepared by Joanna Keller, Executive Assistant

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Development Administration, the U. S. Department of Transportation and the
Appalachian Regional Commission.*

Local Communities / Regional Solutions / Statewide Impacts