



TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

EST. 1958

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEETING

456 Fulton St. Suite 401
Peoria, IL 61602

Greg Menold, CHAIRMAN

(Chuck Nagel, Camille Coates, Russ Crawford, Patrick Urich, Autum Jones, John Kahl, and Danny Phelan)

Monday, May 19, 2025, 9:00 a.m.
TCRPC Conference Room

Virtual Option available through
Microsoft Teams
[Join the meeting now](#)

Meeting ID: 254 703 504 397
Passcode: GfNHbY

AGENDA

1. Call to Order
2. Roll Call
3. Public Input
4. Motion to approve April 21, 2025, minutes
5. Executive Director report
6. Discussion of Executive Director Review (update)
7. Recommendation to the Commission, the approval of the FY26 Budget (Resolution 25-62)
8. Recommendation to the Commission, the approval of an amendment to Employee Handbook, Parental Leave policy (Resolution 25-64)
9. Recommendation to the Commission, the approval of the Executive Director entering into an agreement with CityLink to provide technical services (Resolution 25-63)
10. Other
 - a. Next Meeting will be June 16, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.
11. Adjournment



TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

EST. 1958

EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING

456 Fulton St. Suite 401

Peoria, IL 61602

Greg Menold, CHAIRMAN

**(Chuck Nagel, Camille Coates, Russ Crawford, Rita Ali, Autum Jones,
John Kahl, and Danny Phelan)**

Monday, April 21, 2025 9:00 a.m.

MINUTES

1. Call to Order

Chairman Greg Menold called the meeting to order at 9:01 a.m.

2. Roll Call

Present: Greg Menold, Chuck Nagel, Camille Coates, Russ Crawford, Rita Ali, Autum Jones, John Kahl and Danny Phelan. Also present were Kathie Brown (GPEDC), Patrick Urich-Peoria City Manager, and Eric Miller, Ray Lees and Lori Reynolds from TCRPC.

3. Public Input: Eric Miller stated that Patrick Urich will be replacing Mayor Rita Ali on the Executive Committee. Russ Crawford stated that he was happy to have the City Manager on Board.

4. Motion to approve February 10, 2025, minutes

Autum Jones motioned to approve the February 10, 2025 minutes, and Danny Phelan seconded the motion. Motion carried.

5. Executive Director Report

Eric Miller that that TCRPC has been monitoring the Executive Orders from Washington, DC. There don't currently appear to be any threats. Contracts are moving along nicely, and there are no expected interruptions to direct funding, however some discretionary programs may have impact on how projects are being selected.

The SS4A is extended with different criteria and will be available for public review soon.

The USEPA has tentatively agreed that as long as a Brownfield project area meets the income requirements of the grant, it can go outside the initial target area of zip code 61605. This expands opportunities for organizations like GPEDC and allows the city of Peoria to utilize it to its fullest degree. May bring in areas like Marquette Heights and Pekin.

6. Draft Budget FY26

The latest version of the budget was presented, showing a positive budget of \$95,000 with a total revenue of \$2.6 million. The biggest difference compared to last year's budget is the addition of the Peoria County Comprehensive Plan. The budget is in its draft stage and will be recommended for approval at the next meeting.

7. **Discussion of Executive Director's Evaluation Process**

Greg Menold stated the last evaluation was done with Don White in 2023, with the full commission's input. It was an extensive process and he struggled with it.

Chuck Nagle stated that it was a problem, and it should really be handled by the Personnel Committee. A couple templates were discussed, and the evaluation will be completed by Personnel, with Chuck then compiling the results and bringing results to the Executive committee for input before recommending it to the full commission.

Russ Crawford stated that he didn't know Personnel was working on the performance evaluation, but will discuss the process with Chuck after this meeting. The evaluation is definitely overdue.

8. **Recommend to the Commission the approval of updates to the Employee Handbook (Resolution 25-46)**

Russ Crawford motioned to recommend to the Commission the approval of updates to the Employee Handbook, and Chuck Nagle seconded the motion.

Three amendments to the Employee Handbook were recommended:

- a. Eric stated the current Complaint Policy is not thorough enough. The policy has been updated to provide a more extensive and structured process for handling complex complaints, ensuring fair resolution.
- b. The handbook had not previously contained a Parental Leave Policy, and it was recently discovered that TCRPC is covered by the Family Medical Leave Act, so a policy was pulled together to mirror the FMLA rules, guaranteeing job security for up to 12 weeks for employees taking leave for pregnancy, adoption, or spousal support.
- c. The professional fee reimbursement policy has been revised to require employees to pay fees upfront and seek reimbursement, ensuring better financial tracking and accountability.

Motion carried, subject to an attorney's review before being presented to the commission.

9. **Recommend to the Commission the approval of Wage and Salary increases (Resolution 25-53)**

Russ Crawford motioned to approve the recommendation to the Commission the approval of the Wage and Salary Increase. Chuck Nagle seconded the motion.

Eric Miller stated that the salary schedule was adjusted by 3.1% based on the increase in the Consumer Price Index. This adjustment is to keep the salary and wages for new hires competitive.

Motion carried.

10. **Recommend to the Commission the approval of Cost of Living increase (Resolution 25-54)**

Danny Phelan motioned to recommend to the Commission the approval of the cost-of-living increase. Motion was seconded by Camille Coates.

Eric Miller stated that the Consumer Price Index has increased by 3.1%, compared to 3.5% last year. He recommends a cost-of-living adjustment for all staff of 3.1%, totaling \$23,412, effective July 1, 2025.

Motion carried.

11. **Recommend to the Commission the approval of IMRF Buy-Back of Out-of-State Time (Resolution 25-48)**

Chuck Nagle motioned to recommend to the Commission the approval of IMRF Buy-Back of Out-of-State Time. Danny Phelan seconded the motion.

Eric Miller stated that Senior Planner Debbi LaRue worked in CA for 2 years prior to coming to TCRPC. She would like to buy back the service credit from her previous employment. The Personnel Committee discussed the negligible cost to the Commission and agreed to support her request.

Danny Phelan suggested setting some parameters for future incoming employees. Chuck Nagle recommended reviewing each case individually. Danny stated that information should be collected during the interview process.

Motion carried.

12. Discussion and Recommendation to the Commission on using up to \$40,000 Local Funds to match \$160,000 Federal grant dollars for the purpose of conducting a Bus Stop Inventory and Analysis in the Regional CityLink System (Resolution 25-55)

Danny Phelan motioned to approve recommendation to the Commission on using up to \$40,000 Local Funds to match \$160,000 Federal grant dollars for the purpose of conducting a Bus Stop Inventory and Analysis in the Regional CityLink System. Camille Coates seconded the motion.

Eric stated TCRPC was offered a grant from IDOT to collect an inventory of bus stops, shelters and sidewalks. The project will have a positive impact on the budget, and he would like to get the project under contract before the offer lapses. CityLink would like to participate but hasn't signed anything yet.

Motion carried.

13. Discussion of Building Resilient Economies in Coal Communities (BRECC) housing implementation strategies

Kathie Brown from GPEDC presented an initiative to address housing issues in the region. The initiative includes a housing needs assessment, a housing summit, and coordination with communities to investigate housing needs.

Eric Miller stated that it would need to be discussed with the board. Tri-County used to have a housing division in the 1960s-70s. Need to have a regional facilitator for discussion among the counties. This isn't a priority for Tri-County, maybe the City of Peoria might be a better expert.

14. Other

- a. Next meeting will be May 19, 2025 at 9:00 a.m.

9. Adjournment

Danny Phelan motioned to adjourn, seconded by Camille Coates. Meeting was adjourned at 10:16 a.m.

Submitted by: Eric Miller, Executive Director
Recorded and transcribed by: Lori Reynolds

To: Members of the Commission
From Eric W. Miller, Executive Director
Date: May 15, 2025
Subject: Executive Director Report for May, 2025

| Project | Activity | Status |
|--|---|----------|
| Administrative | | |
| Headlines | | |
| | Monitored Presidential Executive Orders regarding Federal Transportation Bill Funding | Ongoing |
| | Coordination with IDOT regarding Federal Funding Issues | Ongoing |
| | SS4A public meeting | Ongoing |
| | Regional Housing Coordination Outreach to Counties | Ongoing |
| | Discussion with EPA regarding Brownfields Assessment Grant and administrative costs | Ongoing |
| | Development of scope of services for City Link Planning agreement | Ongoing |
| | | |
| Personnel | | Complete |
| | Internal update to Salary and benefits study | Ongoing |
| | Updates to Employee Handbook as a result for input from Personnel Committee | Ongoing |
| | | |
| Website | Content review of website. | Ongoing |
| Planning Issues | | |
| Illinois River Issues | | |
| | Started Discussion regarding Regional Strategic Planning Session on the Environment | |
| | | Ongoing |
| HUD Healthy Homes | Work Ongoing | Ongoing |
| | | |
| Water Supply Planning | Work has commenced | Ongoing |
| | | |
| Watershed Planning | Kickapoo Creek Watershed Plan, work is ongoing | Ongoing |
| | | |
| EPA Brownfield Assessment | Work has commenced | Ongoing |
| | | |
| Peoria County Comp Plan | Consultant Selection | Ongoing |
| GIS Projects/ Asset Management | | |
| Village of Elmwood | Dunlap | Ongoing |
| Washburn | Peoria Heights | Ongoing |
| Minonk | Village of North Pekin | Ongoing |
| Delavan | Village of Washburn | Ongoing |
| North Pekin | Peoria Park District | Ongoing |
| El Paso | Tremont | Ongoing |
| Hollis Park District | Hanna City | Ongoing |
| Chillicothe | Creve Coeur | Ongoing |
| Logan County GIS technical assistance | contract extension executed | Ongoing |
| | | |
| MPO/Transportation | | |
| Technical Committee | Prepare agenda for and coordination for Technical Meetings | ongoing |
| | | |
| Transportation Improvement Program | FY 25 TIP amendments | Ongoing |
| | Creation of web based TIP document | Ongoing |
| | | |
| 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan Update | Plan is adopted | Ongoing |
| | | |
| Highway Safety Improvement Program Guardrails | Engineering phase complete, working on continued complete funding for project | Ongoing |
| Active Transportation Planning | Work with various Stakeholders, coordination of planning efforts | ongoing |
| | | |
| Safe Streets for All SS4A plan | Project is in its final stages | Ongoing |
| | | Ongoing |
| Special Transportation Studies | | |
| FY24 | | |
| IL29 Viaduct CBA | Project Completed | Complete |
| Germantown Hills Trail feasibility Study | Project Completed | Complete |
| Peoria Heights Active Transportation Plan | Project Completed | Complete |
| Waverly Ave Traffic Study | Project Completed | Complete |
| FY25 | | |
| Bartonville Active Transportation plan | Work has commenced | Ongoing |
| City of Peoria Bike Plan update | Work has commenced | Ongoing |
| City of East Peoria Storm Sewer Inv. | Work has Commenced | Ongoing |
| Peoria Heights Parking Study | Work has commenced | Ongoing |
| | | |
| State Planning and Research projects | | |
| | | |
| FY 23 State Planning and Research Funding | | |
| Heart of Illinois Regional Port District Master Planning | Project Ongoing | Ongoing |
| Regional Community Planning | Project underway/ Executed No Cost contract extension with IDOT | Ongoing |
| East Peoria | Project Underway | Ongoing |
| Bartonville | Plan adopted by Village | Complete |
| Creve Coeur | Project Underway | Ongoing |

| | | |
|---|--|---------|
| Germantown Hills | Project Underway | Ongoing |
| Village of Brimfield | Project Underway | Ongoing |
| FY 24 State Planning and Research Funding | Bike and Ped counting equipment and consultant for Traffic Signal data collection- | Ongoing |
| | Consultant selection complete/ Negotiating Contract Scope, Equipment acquired | |
| FY25 State Planning and Research Funding | | |
| IL 29 Multimodal Study | Scope Development. Consultant Procurement | Ongoing |
| | | |
| HSTP/Transportation | | |
| 5310 program Grant | | Ongoing |
| HSTP Plan | Commission Adopted Plan | Ongoing |
| HSTP meetings | | Ongoing |

RESOLUTION 25-62

A RESOLUTION OF THE TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION TO ADOPT THE FISCAL YEAR 2026 BUDGET.

WHEREAS, the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as the Commission, routinely seeks funding from a variety of sources to perform projects that are beneficial to the region and/or to the individual communities in the region, and

WHEREAS, the Commission creates and uses a consolidated budget to manage its programs and monitor its finances, and

WHEREAS, the Executive Board recommends the attached budget,

WHEREAS, the Ways and Means Committee has reviewed the FY 2026 Budget and recommends approval.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission hereby approves and adopts the FY 2026 Budget for the period from July 1, 2025, to June 30, 2026, and authorizes the Executive Director to take such actions as necessary to implement the budget within the confines of the Commission policy.

Presented this 4th day of June 2025

Adopted this 4th day of June 2025

Greg Menold, Chairman
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Eric Miller, Executive Director
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

BUDGET FY26

JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026

| Revenue By Project | FY26 Budget | FY26 Federal | FY26 State | FY26 Local |
|---|---------------------|---------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| FY25 IDOT - UPWP (Remaining Funds) | 185,000.00 | 148,000.00 | 37,000.00 | - |
| FY26 IDOT - UPWP | 1,217,631.94 | 974,105.55 | 243,526.39 | - |
| FY26 MPO Joint Funding - Local Projects (TO BE PROGRAMMED) | 85,311.39 | - | - | 85,311.39 |
| FY26 MPO Joint Funding - Local Projects - Peoria Passenger Rail | 25,000.00 | - | - | 25,000.00 |
| County Dues from MPO Joint Funding | 45,000.00 | - | - | 45,000.00 |
| 5310 FTA | 60,000.00 | 60,000.00 | - | - |
| HSTP - Human Services Transportation Plan | 70,000.00 | 70,000.00 | - | - |
| IDNR - Water Supply Planning | 36,000.00 | - | 36,000.00 | - |
| IDOT - Comprehensive Plans | 15,000.00 | 12,000.00 | - | 3,000.00 |
| IDOT - IL-29 Corridor Study | 100,000.00 | 80,000.00 | 20,000.00 | - |
| IDOT - Multimodal Network Inventory and Acquisition | 284,000.00 | 284,000.00 | - | - |
| FY26 MPO Joint Funding - Local Projects - Multimodal Network | 71,000.00 | - | - | 71,000.00 |
| IDOT - Port District Master Plan | 24,000.00 | 19,200.00 | 4,800.00 | - |
| IEPA - Kickapoo Creek Watershed Study - Federal | 9,500.00 | 9,500.00 | - | - |
| FY26 MPO Joint Funding - Local Projects - Kickapoo Creek | 3,250.00 | - | - | 3,250.00 |
| IDOT - Bus Stop Inventory and Analysis | 111,719.30 | 111,719.30 | - | - |
| IDOT - Bus Stop Inventory and Analysis - Local Funds (GPMTD) | 13,965.00 | - | - | 13,965.00 |
| FY26 MPO Joint Funding - Local Projects - Bus Stop Inventory and Analysis | 13,965.00 | - | - | 13,965.00 |
| USEPA Brownfields Assessment | 75,000.00 | 75,000.00 | - | - |
| GIS Services Dues | 7,200.00 | - | - | 7,200.00 |
| Logan County - GIS | 10,000.00 | - | - | 10,000.00 |
| METEC - HUD Healthy Homes | 2,100.00 | - | - | 2,100.00 |
| Peoria County - Comprehensive Plan | 250,000.00 | - | - | 250,000.00 |
| Tazewell County - Planning Contract | 9,045.00 | - | - | 9,045.00 |
| Woodford County - GIS | 25,000.00 | - | - | 25,000.00 |
| | - | - | - | - |
| Interest | 750.00 | - | - | 750.00 |
| Total FY26 Budgeted Revenue | 2,749,437.63 | 1,843,524.85 | 341,326.39 | 564,586.39 |

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

BUDGET FY26

JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026

| Expenses | | FY26 Budget Estimate |
|--------------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Amortization Expenses: | | |
| | Amortization Expense - Office | 30,209.76 |
| | Amortization Expense - Copier | 5,658.48 |
| | Amortization Expense - SBITAs | - |
| | Total Amortization Expenses | 35,868.24 |
| Computer Expenses: | | |
| | Computer Hardware & Supplies | 11,000.00 |
| | Computer Software & Services | 13,500.00 |
| | Total Computer Expenses | 24,500.00 |
| Outside Services: | | |
| | Computer Support Contracts | 55,812.00 |
| | Contractual Services | 85,000.00 |
| | Consultants | 1,130,832.84 |
| | Total Outside Services | 1,271,644.84 |
| Depreciation: | | 22,542.84 |
| Employee Benefits: | | |
| | Health Insurance | 109,266.83 |
| | Parking | 11,220.00 |
| | Payroll Taxes | 65,722.21 |
| | Retirement | 94,663.98 |
| | Workers Compensation Insurance | 1,155.00 |
| | Total Employee Benefits | 282,028.02 |
| Interest Expenses: | | |
| | Interest Expense - Office | 7,330.92 |
| | Interest Expense - Copier | 71.61 |
| | Total Interest Expenses | 7,402.53 |
| Office Administration: | | |
| | Bank Service Charges | 200.00 |
| | Copier Expense | 200.00 |
| | Fuel (Commission Vehicle) | 500.00 |
| | Internet & Phones | 5,500.00 |
| | Professional Liab & Auto Ins | 5,500.00 |
| | Office Supplies | 3,500.00 |
| | Parking (TRRPC Vehicle / Validations) | 5,000.00 |
| | Postage | 300.00 |
| | Repairs & Maintenance | 2,500.00 |
| | Subscriptions | 50.00 |
| | Office Water | 2,000.00 |
| | Total Office Administration | 25,250.00 |
| Miscellaneous Projects Costs: | | |
| | Advertising | 750.00 |
| | Community Events | 200.00 |
| | Membership Dues | 5,000.00 |
| | Legal Notices | 2,362.53 |
| | Other Miscellaneous Expenses | - |
| | Total Miscellaneous Project Costs | 8,312.53 |
| Professional Fees: | | |
| | Accounting/Audit | 28,000.00 |
| | HR Consultants and Services | - |
| | Legal Fees | 3,000.00 |
| | Total Professional Fees | 31,000.00 |

TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION

BUDGET FY26

JULY 2025 - JUNE 2026

| Expenses | | FY26 Budget Estimate |
|----------------------------------|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Facility Costs: | | |
| | Office Cleaning | 2,520.00 |
| | Property & Casualty Insurance | 7,500.00 |
| | Utilities | 6,000.00 |
| | Total Facility Costs | 16,020.00 |
| Salaries & Wages: | | 842,742.04 |
| Training & Education: | | |
| | In-State Conferences | 10,050.00 |
| | Out-of State Conferences | 3,350.00 |
| | Staff Training | 1,200.00 |
| | Total Training & Education | 14,600.00 |
| Travel: | | |
| | Lodging | - |
| | Meals | 500.00 |
| | Meeting Expenses | 1,000.00 |
| | Mileage Reimbursements | 3,000.00 |
| | Training - Travel | 12,000.00 |
| | Other Travel & Meals | - |
| | Total Travel | 16,500.00 |
| | TOTAL BUDGETED EXPENSES | 2,598,411.04 |
| | | |
| SURPLUS/(DEFICIT) | | 151,026.59 |

RESOLUTION 25-64

A RESOLUTION OF THE TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION TO AMEND THE PARENTAL LEAVE POLICY AS STATED IN ATTACHMENT A.

WHEREAS, the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as the Commission, has established an Employee Handbook that provides employees with general information about working conditions, benefits, and policies of the Commission, and

WHEREAS, the Commission is committed to encouraging growth and development for its employees, and

WHEREAS, the Commission, from time to time, reviews and updates the Employee Handbook to ensure that it complies with federal, state, and local employment laws, and

WHEREAS, there is need to adapt those policies and procedures to attract and retain those employees who will provide guidance in the development and implementation of strategies leading to the adoption of regional approaches addressing issues of interest to the Commission, and

WHEREAS, the Executive Board of the Commission have reviewed the proposed changes of the Parental Leave Policy in the TCRPC Employee Handbook and desire to amend it,

WHEREAS, the Commission attorney reviewed the proposed changes and provided comments and corrections where appropriate.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION AS FOLLOWS:

that the Commission adopt the changes to the Parental Leave Policy in the Employee Handbook as stated in Attachment A, retroactive to May 7, 2025.

Presented this 4th day of June 2025

Adopted this 4th day of June 2025

Greg Menold, Chairman
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Eric Miller, Executive Director
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

ATTACHMENT A

Family Medical Leave Policy

All Commission Employees fall under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and would be eligible for any benefits provided by that Act. Please refer to the Department of Labor Family Medical Leave Act [Guidebook for Employees](#).

In order to take time off for Family Medical Leave due to the birth of a child or placement of a child through adoption or foster care, eligible employees must:

- be a regular full-time or part-time employee; and
- have been employed with Tri-County at least 12 months; and
- have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12-month period immediately before the commencement of leave; and
- have given birth to a child; or
- be a spouse of a woman who has given birth to a child; or
- be the father of a newborn child; or
- have adopted or been placed with a foster child, who is age 17 or younger, except the adoption of a spouse's child, or
- to care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition, and
- give at least 30-days' notice of taking leave when possible.

Employees will be eligible to take up to 12 work weeks off (or 420 hours) per 12-month period by using their accrued paid time off (PTO - vacation, sick, personal). Employees may use IMRF and/or Guardian short-term disability if applicable. The employee is responsible for checking with IMRF and/or Guardian for their specific circumstances. After exhausting all of those options, any remaining necessary time off will be unpaid.

Except in extraordinary circumstances or when required by law, no extended leave shall be granted before an employee has completed six (6) months of employment. Leave without pay will not be granted until an employee has exhausted their accumulated vacation and other paid time off benefits. Leave without pay may be extended for up to

six (6) months with the prior approval of the Executive Director; these issues will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

HEALTH COVERAGE DURING FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE – During the employee's absence, Tri-County will continue to pay its share of an employee's health coverage. Should an employee be absent from work for an extended leave period and the employee is being compensated through accrued paid time off approved by the Executive Director, the employee's portion of fringe benefits will be deducted from the employee's paychecks from the Commission.

If an employee's planned extended leave exceeds accrued leaves, and the employee enters disability leave or unpaid leave, the employee's portion of health insurance coverage should be paid prior to the planned extended leave period, if possible. If this is not possible, the employee portion of health insurance coverage will be repaid upon the employee's return to work through a repayment plan.

If an employee determines they will not be returning to work, they must notify the Commission immediately. If an employee fails to return to work following a planned leave, unless such failure is due to continuation of a medical condition or circumstances beyond the employee's control, the employee must repay Tri-County the full cost of health coverage and fringe benefits paid during the leave period that exceeds their accrued leaves.



MEMORANDUM

TO: Executive Board of the Commission

FROM: Executive Director

SUBJECT: Revision to the Parental Leave Policy

DATE: May 19, 2025

Action Needed

For discussion and recommendation to forward the policy revision to the full commission for approval.

Background

The Tri-County Regional Planning Commission board passed a new Parental Leave Policy at the full commission meeting on May 7, 2025. Subsequent to the meeting, staff discovered language in the policy that was likely to be misinterpreted. Management contacted the TCRPC attorney and the attorney suggested a revision to the language in the Parental Leave Policy to provide clarity in procedure going forward.

The language in the policy that was passed at the May 7, 2025 meeting indicates that all of an employee's paid time off must be exhausted before applying for short-term disability benefits through IMRF and/or Guardian Insurance. However, neither IMRF nor Guardian short-term disability insurance coverage requires all paid time off must be exhausted before disability benefits are paid to an employee. Both insurance policies require a waiting period before disability payments begin, and disability payments are not allowed while an employee is receiving a paycheck. Therefore, the requirement to use all paid time off before applying for short-term disability insurance benefits does not allow employees to make the best use of their benefits.

The TCRPC attorney suggests striking the policy language that indicates an employee's paid time off must be exhausted before applying for short-term disability benefits.

The paragraph in question from the Parent Leave Policy is as follows:

Original Policy Language:

"Employees will be eligible to take up to 12 work weeks off (or 420 hours) per 12-month period by using their accrued paid time off (PTO - vacation, sick, personal). After exhausting their PTO, they may use IMRF and/or Guardian short-term disability if applicable. The employee is responsible for checking with IMRF and/or Guardian for their specific circumstances. After exhausting all of those options, any remaining necessary time off will be **unpaid**."

Suggested Revision:

~~After exhausting their PTO,~~ "Employees may use IMRF and/or Guardian short-term disability if applicable."

The suggested change to the Parental Leave policy will not cause any additional expense to Tri-County and may be implemented retroactively without legal consequences.

Discussion

Management would appreciate input from the Executive Board on the suggested policy revision. We are seeking a recommendation to forward this revision to the Full Commission for retroactive approval.

Supplemental Information

Parental Leave Policy (passed by TCRPC Full Commission 05/07/2025)

Family Medical Leave Policy

All Commission Employees fall under the Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) and would be eligible for any benefits provided by that Act. Please refer to the Department of Labor Family Medical Leave Act [Guidebook for Employees](#).

In order to take time off for Family Medical Leave due to the birth of a child or placement of a child through adoption or foster care, eligible employees must:

- be a regular full-time or part-time employee; and
- have been employed with Tri-County at least 12 months; and
- have worked at least 1250 hours during the 12-month period immediately before the commencement of leave; and
- have given birth to a child; or
- be a spouse of a woman who has given birth to a child; or
- be the father of a newborn child; or
- have adopted or been placed with a foster child, who is age 17 or younger, except the adoption of a spouse's child, or
- to care for a child, spouse, or parent with a serious health condition, and
- give at least 30-days' notice of taking leave when possible.

Employees will be eligible to take up to 12 work weeks off (or 420 hours) per 12-month period by using their accrued paid time off (PTO - vacation, sick, personal). After exhausting their PTO, they may use IMRF and/or Guardian short-term disability if applicable. The employee is responsible for checking with IMRF and/or Guardian for their specific circumstances. After exhausting all of those options, any remaining necessary time off will be **unpaid**.

Except in extraordinary circumstances or when required by law, no leave shall be granted before an employee has completed six (6) months of employment. Leave without pay will not be granted until an employee has exhausted their accumulated vacation and other paid time off benefits. Leave without pay may be extended for up to six (6) months with the prior approval of the Executive Director; these issues will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.

HEALTH COVERAGE DURING FAMILY MEDICAL LEAVE – During the employee's absence, Tri-County will continue to pay its share of an employee's health coverage. Should an employee be absent from work for an extended leave period and the employee is being compensated through accrued paid time off approved by the Executive Director, the employee's portion of fringe benefits will be deducted from the employee's paychecks from the Commission.

If an employee's planned extended leave exceeds accrued leaves, and the employee enters disability leave or unpaid leave, the employee's portion of health insurance coverage should be paid prior to the planned extended leave period, if possible. If this is not possible, the employee portion of health insurance coverage will be repaid upon the employee's return to work through a repayment plan.

If an employee determines they will not be returning to work, they must notify the Commission immediately. If an employee fails to return to work following a planned leave, unless such failure is due to continuation of a medical condition or circumstances beyond the employee's control, the employee must repay Tri-County the full cost of health coverage and fringe benefits paid during the leave period that exceeds their accrued leaves.

Notes from Attorney Frank W. Ierulli, Heyl Royster

Issue: Is there any negative legal impact to revising the recently adopted TCRP Parental Leave Policy to better coordinate its best use with existing benefits.

Law: The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) sets minimum requirements for employee leave rights under federal law. The current language of the TCRP policy is lawful and consistent with FMLA. However, you may provide greater leave benefits than the minimum required by FMLA to allow your employees to make the best use of their existing benefits. Further, specific authority for this is found in the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR).

29 CFR § 825.700(b) provides in pertinent part "[n]othing in this Act prevents an employer from amending existing leave and employee benefit programs, provided they comply with FMLA. However, nothing in the Act is intended to discourage employers from adopting or retaining more generous leave policies." (italics added)

Conclusion: TCRP may amend their policy so long as it meets the minimum required by FMLA. The proposed amendment would create a more generous leave benefit, in that it would allow TCRP employees to make the best use of their existing IMRF and/or Guardian short-term disability insurance coverage benefits. Thus, there would be no negative legal impact to revising the recently adopted TCRP Parental Leave Policy.

If TCRP determines amending the recently adopted TCRP Parental Leave Policy is

appropriate, I would suggest the following revision:

“Employees will be eligible to take up to 12 work weeks off (or 420 hours) per 12-month period by using their accrued paid time off (PTO - vacation, sick, personal). Employees may use IMRF and/or Guardian short-term disability if applicable. The employee is responsible for checking with IMRF and/or Guardian for their specific circumstances. After exhausting all of those options, any remaining necessary time off will be unpaid.”

The proposed amendment would require Board approval but could be implemented retroactively.

RESOLUTION 25-63

A RESOLUTION OF THE TRI-COUNTY REGIONAL PLANNING COMMISSION TO AUTHORIZE THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR TO ENTER INTO AND IMPLEMENT A CONTRACT FOR TRANSIT PLANNING SERVICES AND GIS INTERACTIVE MAP HOSTING FOR THE GREATER PEORIA MASS TRANSIT DISTRICT.

WHEREAS, the Tri-County Regional Planning Commission, hereafter referred to as the Commission, frequently collaborates with the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District, hereafter referred to as GPMTD, on transit-related issues, and

WHEREAS, GPMTD has voiced interest in the need for transit planning services, and the Commission has expressed an interest in helping fill this staffing request by splitting some Commission staff members' time with GPMTD, and

WHEREAS, Commission staff met with GPMTD officials to set a scope of work for services to create a contract, where the Commission and GPMTD agreed on a proposal and budget for the scope of services, and

WHEREAS, the proposal, budget, and scope of services includes the assignment of Commission planning and geographic information system, hereafter referred to as GIS, staff support services, and

WHEREAS, the proposal also includes a monthly fee for TCRPC to host an interactive, up to date, online GIS-based transit map that indicates which transit service(s) are available across different parts of the tri-county area.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COMMISSION AS FOLLOWS:

That the Commission authorizes its Executive Director to enter into a contract for transit planning services and GIS interactive map hosting from July 1, 2025, through June 30, 2026, with the Greater Peoria Mass Transit District for an amount not to exceed \$68,000.

Presented this 4th day of June 2025

Adopted this 4th day of June 2025

Greg Menold, Chairman
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission

ATTEST:

Eric Miller, Executive Director
Tri-County Regional Planning Commission