



Lehigh Valley Transportation Study

LAMONT G. MCCLURE, JR.
Chair, Coordinating Committee

BRENDAN COTTER
Chair, Technical Committee

BECKY A. BRADLEY, AICP
Secretary,
Coordinating Committee +
Technical Committee

**Lehigh Valley Transportation Study
Minutes from the Wednesday, December 21, 2022
Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting
DUE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC THIS MEETING WAS HELD VIA
WEB AND/OR CALL**

Prior to the meeting being called to order, Ms. Milagio stated that the agenda and materials for this meeting were posted on the LVPC website. She provided directions on how to participate in the virtual meeting and the protocol to allow the meeting to flow smoothly. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on Wednesday January 5, 2022.

Mr. Lamont McClure chaired the meeting.

Mr. McClure welcomed the members and the public participants and called the meeting to order.

Ms. Milagio took Roll Call.

Attendees:

Technical Committee

| | |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| Brendan Cotter | LANTA |
| Ryan Meyer | LNAA |
| Becky Bradley, AICP | LVPC |
| David Hopkins (Alt) | City of Easton |
| Jennifer Ruth | PennDOT District 5 |
| David Alas | PennDOT Central Office |

LVTS Coordinating Committee

| | |
|----------------------|------------------------|
| Lamont McClure | Northampton County |
| David Petrik | City of Allentown |
| Becky Bradley, AICP | LVPC |
| Michael Alkhal (Alt) | City of Bethlehem |
| David Hopkins (Alt) | City of Easton |
| Owen O'Neill | LANTA |
| Brian Hare | PennDOT Central Office |
| Thomas Stoudt | LNAA |

Members Absent: Matthew Tuerk/Mark Hartney, William Reynolds/Darlene Heller, Salvatore Panto, Mike Rebert, Phillips Armstrong/Rick Molchany

Staff Present: Matt Assad, Becky Bradley, Brian Hite, Christian Martinez, Hannah Milagio, Patrick Osei, Dean Severson

Public Present: Brian Harman, Andrew Kleiner, Sarah Cassi, Scott Harney, Jeff Rai, Vanessa Koenigkramer, Kerry Cox, Seemon Georges, Lee Rackus, Amanda Leindecker, Sherri Penchishen, Scott Slingerland, Marina Sara, Mike Emili, Scott Vottero, Crystal Heshmat, Brian Milford,

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. McClure opened the floor to members of the public who wish to speak on items not on the agenda, and there were none. ,

Mr. McClure introduced Patrick Osei, the new Director of Transportation Planning and Data at the LVPC, and Christian Martinez, Community Fellow at the LVPC. Mr. Osei and Mr. Martinez spoke briefly of their backgrounds.

Minutes

Mr. Cotter stated that the last Technical Committee was held on November 16, 2022. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on.

- Minutes for the October 26, 2022 meeting
- Adjournment

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Technical Committee Meeting on November 16, 2022. Mr. Alas made the motion for approval of the Technical Committee Meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Ruth. Mr. Cotter asked for any questions or comments from the members and the public. Hearing none, Mr. Cotter asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion carried.

Mr. McClure moved on to the approval of the minutes from the joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting on October 26, 2022. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on.

- Minutes for the August 17, 2022 meeting
- LVTS-LANTA MOU
- LANTA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan Safety Performance Targets
- Adjournment

Mr. McClure asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Coordinating Committee Meeting on October 26, 2022. Mr. Stoudt made the motion for approval of the Technical Committee Meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. Alkhal. Mr. McClure asked for any questions or comments from the members and the public. Hearing none, Mr. McClure asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion carried.

Old Business

PRESENTATION ITEM: PennDOT District 5-0 Highway Status Report

Mr. McClure highlighted the PennDOT District 5 Bridge Projects Status Report on page 14 in the meeting packet, and noted that Mr. Vottero was available to answer any questions. Mr. Vottero briefly reviewed the projects, and highlighted the SR 33 project and the SR 329 project. Both projects are regionally significant, have been advertised, and have a let date of January 12, 2023. Mr. McClure asked if there were questions from the committees or the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: PennDOT Transportation Improvement Program Modifications

Ms. Ruth explained that Administrative Actions are movement of funds within the TIP that do not need a vote from the LVTS. Items of \$2 million or more require a vote from the LVTS; items that are less than \$2 million or are from a statewide funding source do not require a vote. She also clarified that administrative actions to the TIP are limited to projects already formally listed in the approved document, not to new projects.

Ms. Ruth noted that, from August 6, 2022 to September 30, 2022, there were four statewide actions, 11 administrative actions, and one Interstate informational item. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions on the report from committee members or the public, and there were none.

ACTION ITEM: TIP Amendment #1 – Lower South Main over Martins Creek

Ms. Ruth stated that a proposed amendment to the TIP is either the addition of a new project that uses federal funds, or it is an existing project that is over \$2 million that includes federal funds. The first

amendment on the agenda is an existing project that is receiving additional federal funds, and is over the \$2 million threshold.

Ms. Ruth said the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #1 is for Lower South Main Street over Martins Creek (MPMS #85930). The addition of \$3,300,000 to the 2023-2026 TIP is to fully cover the current estimate for construction. Funding sources include the construction phase of Route 248 Realignment, deobligations returned to the region for reassignment, the Urban Line Item, and the construction phase of Box Culvert Bundle-Round 1. This was approved by the PennDOT Program Management Committee PMC on December 14.

Mr. Cotter asked if there were any questions from members. Ms. Bradley said she was glad the project is now moving forward. Mr. Cotter asked if there were any questions from the public, and there were none. Mr. Cotter asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment for Lower South Main Street over Martins Creek and forward it to the Coordinating Committee. Ms. Bradley made the motion to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment, seconded by Mr. Alas. Mr. Cotter asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion carried.

Mr. McClure asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment for Lower South Main Street over Martins Creek forwarded by the Technical Committee. Mr. Hare made the motion to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment, seconded by Ms. Bradley. Mr. McClure asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion carried.

ACTION ITEM: TIP Amendment #2 – 222 + Schantz + 863 Improvements

Ms. Ruth said the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #2 is for 222 & Schantz & 863 Improvements (MPMS #79554). The addition of \$2,784,279 is to cover the current estimated costs related to management and disposal of contaminated soils, additional seed and mulch, concrete pipe change under roadway, and asphalt and diesel adjustments. Funding sources include the construction phase of the 309 & Tilghman Intersection Relocation and a deobligation returned to the region for reassignment. This is pending PMC approval.

Mr. Cotter asked if there were any questions from members and the public, and there were none. Mr. Cotter asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment for 222 & Schantz & 863 Improvements and forward it to the Coordinating Committee. Mr. Meyer made the motion to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment, seconded by Ms. Bradley. Mr. Cotter asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion carried.

Mr. McClure asked for a motion from the Technical Committee to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment for 222 & Schantz & 863 Improvements forwarded by the Technical Committee. Mr. O'Neil made the motion to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment, seconded by Mr. Stoudt. Mr. McClure asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEM: Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Study Project Update

Mr. Cotter noted that the next two agenda items would be reports that were presented to the Technical Committee in September, and that both items would continue to be standing agenda items for the LVTS as both projects continue. Mr. Osei shared that the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis is just starting with a consultant onboard and various initial steps being planned and organized. The analysis is expected to get rolling full ahead in 2023, and regular reports will be provided to the LVTS as the project moves forward. Mr. Cotter asked if any members of the committees or public had any comments or questions, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Eastern PA Freight Alliance Freight Infrastructure Plan

Ms. Bradley provided an update on the Eastern PA Freight Alliance's Freight Infrastructure Plan, which is in the early stages. The consultant is currently working with all the Metropolitan Planning Organization partners on data collection to build the foundation of the plan. Ms. Bradley noted that regular updates on the project will be provided to the LVTS. Mr. Cotter asked if there were any questions from members and the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Management Guide

Mr. McClure congratulated Ms. Bradley and the LVPC staff for the completion of the Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Assessment. Mr. McClure believes that the results of the Guide will be useful in Northampton County and its local governments, in Lehigh County, and other counties in the Eastern PA Freight Region, to help balance job creation and land preservation, as well as to mitigate freight impacts in the region. He stated that this Guide, and the tools that accompany it, will make significant progress in empowering municipalities to control their own destinies. In the Commonwealth, municipalities hold a great deal of power over land use decisions. Mr. McClure noted that the County wanted to support municipalities through this project, and believes the Guide and its tools will do that. He also thanked the LVPC staff.

Mr. Severson presented information about the Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Management Guide. The Guide assists municipal governments in planning for freight-based land uses in areas that are compatible with adjoining land uses and are served by adequate public infrastructure such as public sewer, water, and transportation. The Guide also helps municipalities ensure that current ordinances are adequate to address the impacts of freight-based land uses. The guide, along with a zoning analysis tool and a virtual training, is available on Northampton County's Community and Economic Development website, www.northamptoncounty.org/CMTYECDV.

Mr. McClure thanked Mr. Severson for his work on the project. Mr. McClure asked Ms. Bradley to elaborate on how the LVPC will follow up with municipalities on the Guide. Ms. Bradley noted that the LVPC is planning to offer training sessions to local leaders and third-party professionals that support municipalities, in order to facilitate ordinance amendments and other tools. Mr. McClure asked Ms. Bradley to elaborate on the content of the Guide and its potential, transformational impact for municipalities. Ms. Bradley noted that many communities had some tools in place, so the Guide was able to highlight these examples to give specific language to address certain aspects of the freight issue. The Guide also explains how to combine land use tools to help municipalities meet their goals and manage their land use.

Mr. McClure asked if any members or the public had questions or comments on the presentation. Ms. Bradley read Ms. Rackus' question from the chat box: If you are doing the Lehigh County version of this report, how does one go about being involved in this process? Ms. Bradley noted that the LVPC will be coordinating an all-community meeting with Lehigh County to kick off the process once all the Lehigh County ordinances are reviewed. The LVPC will listen to feedback from municipal partners and use that feedback to start writing the guide.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any additional questions or comments from the members or the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Monthly Traffic Report

Mr. Hite noted that traffic in November was relatively typical across the four traffic counters collecting volume data. At the end of November, Route 22 between Airport Road and the Lehigh River Bridge showed the highest traffic volume recorded on the Tuesday before Thanksgiving, with 110,517 vehicles and it went back to normal 22 levels on the last Tuesday with 101,925. Route 33 near Route 248 registered 80,080 at the end of November, Interstate 78 near Route 309 reported 68,728 vehicles, and Route 309 near Coopersburg in Lehigh County had 37,413 vehicles. Mr. Hite also noted that two traffic

counters collected classification data and showed that there were 21,269 trucks on Interstate 78 near 309 and 14,214 trucks on Route 22 in September.

Mr. Hite also shared data that showed different vehicle types travelling east- and west-bound on Route 22 and Interstate 78 on Wednesday September 14, 2022. The data showed that Route 22 east-bound traffic contained 46,062 passenger vehicles and 6,919 commercial sized trucks, while west-bound traffic saw 42,554 passenger vehicles and 6,730 commercial sized trucks. In contrast, Interstate 78 near Route 309 had 21,713 commercial trucks to close out November. However, on November 15, 10 days before Thanksgiving had the highest truck total at 23,532, which shows that the retail and ecommerce still requires trucks to make those deliveries to stores and homes. Route 22 had 14,372 commercial trucks, with an increase of trucks on November 15th once again providing our highest truck total at 15,509 trucks, once again indicating the holiday shopping season.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any comments about the traffic report from the members or the public, and there were none.

New Business

INFORMATION ITEM: Annual Listing of Obligated + Deobligated Projects

Mr. Hite stated that the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study reports annually on the amount of federal funds obligated on transportation projects by reporting its Annual Listing of Obligated Projects. It is a requirement of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act legislation signed into law November 15, 2021, and the previous Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or the FAST ACT, which covered a portion of the Federal Fiscal Year 2022 from October 1 to November 15, 2021. This report is required under Title 23 of the United States Code, Part 450, Subpart C concerning Metropolitan Transportation Planning and Programming, which mandates that Pennsylvania Planning Partners and public transportation operators provide a list of where dollars were both invested and saved on projects in order to responsibly track fiscal actions taken for each region. This report is on Funds for obligated and Deobligated projects for the 2022 year of the 2021-2024 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). In Federal Fiscal Year 2022, the LVTS had 103 Obligated Phases of Projects, for a total of \$103.2 million dollars and 32 Deobligated Phases of Projects for \$8 million. The full list of projects can be found at www.lvpc.org/2022-tip-obligated-projects.

Mr. Martinez highlighted a major project on the list, the Tilghman Street Bridge in the City of Allentown. The bridge project overcame several challenges, including the COVID-19 Pandemic and unforeseen deterioration, and is an essential historic bridge to some of the most economically challenged parts in the City of Allentown. During the reconstruction, this bridge still maintained Pedestrian Access as an essential part to the equity and mode of community access across the Lehigh River for the residents, students and visitors.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from members or the public on presentation, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: 2023 Transportation Work Program

Ms. Bradley stated that the LVPC Executive Committee adopted the 2023 Annual Budget and Workplan on December 15, 2022. A portion of this plan is specifically for the work of the LVTS, in accordance with the Unified Planning Work Program. Operating as a single agency, with two distinct and separate boards and a shared staff and budget, the Lehigh Valley Planning Commission (LVPC) as the bi-county planning agency and the Lehigh Valley Transportation Study (LVTS), as the federally designated Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) for the Lehigh Valley Metropolitan Area annually create a single work program. The document details work to be initiated and/or completed by LVPC/LVTS (Commission, when used jointly) during 2023.

Ms. Bradley highlighted a few of the items listed in the workplan, specifically those listed on pages 100-101 of the meeting packet. She also noted that, in 2023, both the LVPC and LVTS are evolving the work program to reflect the changing region as well as new regulations and requirements for MPOs. The 2023 Work Program is driven by the regulatory requirements for both county planning agencies and MPOs and within this framework responds to national, state, regional, county and local issues and opportunities. As the Lehigh Valley enters a new era several key changes have been noted by board members, government, non-profit and for-profit partners and the community. The LVPC/LVTS 2023 Work Program is designed to respond to these societal shifts and changes in regulatory requirements, while meeting the mission, legislative and contractual obligations of the organization.

Ms. Bradley noted that a key component of the Work Program is the 2022-2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) which began July 1, 2022 and is an active agreement through June 30, 2024. The UPWP outlines the tasks to meet the requirements of the federal transportation planning program. MPOs have the responsibility to undertake a performance-based planning and programming approach to making investments in our transportation system. LVPC achieves this approach by following the direction and guidance provided by the federal FAST (Fixing America's Surface Transportation) Act and the Clean Air Act Amendments (CAAA), as well as undertaking the region's priority planning initiatives as identified by the LVTS in partnership with the LVPC. As new regulations and guidance for MPOs are issued from the November 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA), LVPC will update the UPWP, as needed. Ms. Bradley also highlighted Key Plans and Programs of the LVTS, listed on pages 108-109.

Ms. Bradley asked if there were any questions from members and the public, and there were none.

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM: Assessment of In-Person/Virtual formats for future LVTS meetings in 2023

Ms. Bradley noted that the LVPC has had hybrid meeting equipment installed by a third-party company, but there is an audio issue that the company is currently working to address. Because of this issue, the staff requests that LVTS meetings remain virtual, with the option for individuals to request in-person participation, until this issue can be addressed. Ms. Bradley also noted that LVTS member and public participation has been very high since meetings moved to a virtual platform.

Mr. McClure asked if there was any discussion or questions on this item, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Public Engagement and Participation

Mr. Assad shared that the US Department of Transportation is now taking applications for 2023 RAISE grants for \$1.5 billion worth of funding for critical road, bridge, trail, freight and public transit projects. This is the same program in which the LVTS was awarded \$21.2 million for the Riverside Drive project, so we know from experience that it's a complex application. The deadline to apply is February 28, but US DOT estimates the application will take 2-4 weeks to complete. This is a program designed to tackle major, multi-million-dollar transportation projects, but any community that wants to compete for this should get started right away. More info is available at www.transportation.gov/RAISEgrants/apply.

Mr. Assad shared that the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection's Driving PA Forward program is piloting a competitive grant initiative to replace aging fleets of diesel-powered medium- and heavy-duty local freight trucks with new zero emission trucks, with top priority given to projects that serve Environmental Justice communities. Municipalities and non-profits are eligible for \$12.7 million in grant funding statewide. The deadline for this grant is March 1, but a pre-application meeting with a DEP program administrator is required. For more information, search "Driving PA Forward" and click on the "MHD-ZEV Fleet" tab at the top.

Mr. Assad shared that PennDOT's Green Light Go Program will open January 3, 2023. Municipalities can apply for Green Light Go grants to replace or modernize their traffic signals. A 20% match is required and the deadline to apply is January 31. The guidelines and application are available at PennDOT's Traffic Signal Portal.

Mr. Assad noted that the most recent Plan Lehigh Valley radio show hosted State Representatives Mike Schlossberg and Zachary Mako. The show covered how growth is putting development pressure on the region, ways state legislators are trying to address it, and tips for how people can get involved in their community. Mr. Assad also shared that the most recent Business Cycle Column published December 4, in the Morning Call. In the column, Becky talks about the benefits meeting our many community, municipal and government partners in-person, rather than virtually, during the 9th Annual Lehigh Valley Outlook and Awards event November 15 at Lehigh University's picturesque Iacocca Conference Center. The column also gave an overview of the population, development, housing, traffic and greenhouse gas data released during the event.

Mr. Hite reviewed the upcoming virtual classes through the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). These classes include: Roadway Resurfacing and the ADA (1/5, 11 AM – noon), Traffic Signal Basics (2/3, 8 AM – noon), Project Estimating Using Mathematical Principles (2/7, 8 AM – noon), Erosion and Sediment Control (2/14, 8 AM – noon). All are free and anyone can sign up at lvpc.org/ltap or contact Brian Hite.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions from members or the public, and there were none.

Adjournment

Mr. McClure stated that the next Technical Committee meeting will be held on January 18, 2023 at 9 AM, and that the next Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting will be held February 15, 2023 at 9 AM. Mr. McClure thanked the members their active participation and work in 2022, and wished all meeting participants a happy and safe holiday season. Mr. Stoudt made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Alas. The meeting was adjourned.