



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, October 26, 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
Becky Bradley, AICP	LVPC
David Hopkins	City of Easton
Jennifer Ruth	PennDOT District 5
David Alas	PennDOT Central Office

LVTS Coordinating Committee

Lamont McClure	Northampton County
Mike Rebert	PennDOT District 5
David Petrik	City of Allentown
Becky Bradley, AICP	LVPC
Michael Alkhal (Alt)	City of Bethlehem
David Hopkins	City of Easton
Rick Molchany (Alt)	Lehigh County
Owen O'Neill	LANTA
Brian Hare	PennDOT Central Office
Thomas Stoudt	LNAA

Members Absent: Matthew Tuerk, Mark Hartney, William Reynolds, Darlene Heller, AICP, Salvatore Panto, Phillips Armstrong

Staff Present: Matt Assad, Becky Bradley, Brian Hite, Hannah Milagio, Dean Severson

Public Present: Brian Harman, Scott Harney, Jeff Rai, Scott Slingerland, Vanessa Koenigkramer, Ralph Eberhardt, Brad Barndt, Evan Jones, Tony Klapatch, Masoud Salloum, Andrew Kleiner, Brian Miller, Scott Cocherell, Sari Chammas

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. McClure opened the floor to the public who wish to speak on items not on the agenda. Hearing none, he moved on to the minutes.

Minutes

Mr. Cotter stated that the last Technical Committee was held on September 21, 2022. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on.

- Minutes for the August 17, 2022 meeting
- Statewide TAM Plan and Associate LVTS-LANTA MOU
- LANTA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Safety Performance Targets and Goals
- Adjournment

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Technical Committee Meeting on September 21, 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 August 17, 2022. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on.

- Minutes for the June 15, 2022 meeting
- TIP Amendment #1 Cementon Bridge Email Ballot Affirmation
- TIP Amendment #2 Riverside Drive
- Performance Target Setting for Peak Hour Excessive Delay and Non-Single Occupancy Vehicles
- Adjournment

Mr. McClure asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Coordinating Committee Meeting on August 17, 2022. Mr. Molchany made the motion for approval of the Technical Committee Meeting minutes, seconded by Mr. O'Neil. 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 Highway Projects Status Report in the meeting packet, and noted that Mr. Vottero was available to answer any questions. Projects reviewed included:

- US 22 Section WDN Widening
- SR 29 Section 04S Cedar Crest Boulevard Signal Upgrades
- SR 145 Section MLT 7th Street Multimodal Corridor
- SR 145 Section 14S Route 145 Signal Improvements
- SR 145 Section 13S Route 145 Safety Improvements
- SR 309 Section 14M Betterment
- SR 309 Section 12M 309 & Tilghman Interchange
- SR 1004 Section 03S Lehigh-Race Street Intersection
- SR 1017 Section 02S Mauch Chunk Signal Improvements
- SR 248 Section 05S Route 248 Realignment
- SR 248 Section 06S Route 248 Signal Improvements

Mr. McClure asked if there were questions and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: PennDOT Transportation Improvement Program Modifications

Ms. Ruth noted that, from August 6, 2022 to September 30, 2022, there were 17 administrative actions. She noted that these actions could be found on pages 25-32 of the meeting packet, asked if there were any questions, and there were none.

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. Ms. Bradley shared that the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis is being led by the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's Multimodal Office. WSP has been contracted and formally agreed to study the potential for passenger service between New Jersey and the Lehigh Valley and Philadelphia and the Lehigh Valley. Ms. Bradley noted that regular updates on the project will be provided to the LVTS. Mr. Cotter asked if there were any questions on the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis from members and the public, 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. The Alliance, led by the LVTS, represents 10 counties and includes the Lackawanna-Luzerne MPO, Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance MPO, Reading Area Transportation Study and Lebanon County MPO. WSP is the lead consultant for the project and has partnered with Cambridge Systematics, BJH Advisors and LDG. The project scope includes a regional freight profile, which will use mapping and freight trends to determine any deficiencies and needs. The planning effort will also include recommendations on policy and infrastructure. Stakeholder engagement will occur throughout the planning process. The workplan for the project kicked off earlier this month, and the plan is slated to be completed by September 2023. 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. Mr. McClure asked if Ms. Bradley could address how the Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Assessment would impact this plan in the next presentation, and Ms. Bradley agreed. Mr. Cotter asked if there were any additional questions from members and the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Assessment

Mr. McClure noted that warehouse growth is common issue brought to his attention by county residents. While there can be economic benefits with warehouses, there are also concerns with their growth including the loss of farmland, truck traffic escalation, and air pollution. This growth is the result of a shift in the nation's shopping habits, as well as the region's proximity to interstates and major metropolitan areas. Mr. McClure stated that the County has limited influence over warehouses because zoning is controlled by municipalities. The County is taking action to preserve farmland and open space, including the addition of the Bodnarczuk Preserve in Allen Township. Since 2006, the County has preserved 300 acres of parkland and 17,704 acres of farmland. Northampton County is working with LVPC to create planning tools intended to help municipalities keep warehouse development in appropriate areas that have the infrastructure needed to handle the truck traffic. This partnership will also produce a freight-based land use study with model ordinances that municipalities can use to draft their own regulations.

Mr. Severson presented information about the Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Assessment, which will facilitate the creation of a series of zoning, subdivision and land development ordinances and impact fee guidance to communities by type (urban, suburban, exurban or rural). LVPC staff developed an in-depth Freight Based Mapping Tool which identifies zoning codes that allow freight based generating uses including oil and gas, food production, material extraction, manufacturing uses, warehouse, wholesale and terminals, waste management, and other industrial uses. Mr. Severson noted that the guidance for municipalities will include definitions for warehousing and distribution land uses, recommendations for transportation concerns, and municipal tools for growth management.

Mr. McClure asked if any members had questions or comments on the presentation. Ms. Bradley noted that the information provided by the Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Assessment gives important context for the Eastern PA Freight Alliance's Freight Infrastructure Plan, and will help match what local governments' land use designations with freight infrastructure. Ms. Bradley stated that both

Lehigh and Northampton Counties understand the impact of increased truck traffic and its impact on road and bridge infrastructure. This, in turn, impacts the LVTS' work and investments in the region, as well as the local governments, counties and PennDOT who work to maintain the infrastructure itself.

Understanding how land uses are designated in the County will help the Freight Infrastructure Plan direct vehicle freight onto roadways that can support it. Ms. Bradley noted that Northampton County has taken a leadership position by conducting this study, and she hopes that this will influence the other MPOs in the Eastern PA Freight Alliance to conduct similar studies in their regions.

Mr. O'Neil commented that this analysis will also support industrial development in areas where infrastructure already exists, particularly existing LANTA bus routes and transit service. This helps LANTA's efforts to provide better access to those facilities for people who are looking to access jobs.

Mr. Molchany thanked Northampton County for taking initiative to study and assist in the development of this project. This project will bring a wealth of information to the municipalities, and Lehigh County is happy to continue these efforts to develop land use tools across the region. Mr. McClure thanked Mr. Molchany for his comments, and he noted that Ms. Bradley and Mark Hartney also deserve to be recognized because of their efforts for this plan.

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 September was relatively typical across three of the four traffic counters collecting volume data. At the end of September, Route 22 between Airport Road and the Lehigh River Bridge showed 106,469 vehicles, Route 33 near Route 248 registered 81,396 vehicles, Interstate 78 near Route 309 reported 72,534 vehicles, and Route 309 near Coopersburg in Lehigh County had 40,009 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 east-bound traffic contained 25,361 passenger vehicles and 11,236 commercial trucks, while west-bound traffic saw 25,442 passenger vehicles and 10,749 commercial trucks.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions about the traffic report from the members. Mr. McClure asked Mr. Hite if there had been any educated speculation as to why the eastbound traffic was heavier than the westbound traffic. Mr. Hite replied that he would be taking a deeper look at the data, as the data presented only reflected one day of traffic data and there could have been a specific cause for this difference, such as an accident or road closure. Mr. McClure asked if there any additional questions or comments from members or the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Local Technical Assistance Program Annual Report

Mr. Hite presented the 2021-2022 annual report for the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). LVPC/LVTS coordinates LTAP through PennDOT and the Federal Highway Administration to provide transportation-related training and technical assistance to municipalities and their partner organizations. LTAP trainings and technical assistance are free of charge, and they are emerging as a critical element of the Transportation Alternative Set-Aside (TASA) funding.

Mr. Hite noted that 260 students from the Lehigh Valley attended LTAP trainings, representing 33 of the 62 municipalities in the region. Three municipalities held in-person classes that reached 56 students for

trainings on Winter Maintenance and Principals of Paving. The City of Bethlehem also held PennDOT Connects trainings with LTAP instructors that were specific to the needs of the City. Mr. Hite encouraged municipalities to reach out to him directly to request technical assistance regarding transportation issues, as they are valuable for grant funding and provide a document upon completion that identifies issues and provides best practices. Mr. Hite reported that, from July 2021 to June 2022, the LVTS provided 17 virtual tech assists, 15 in-person tech assists, and trained 115 individuals.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from members. Mr. Molchany asked Mr. Hite if the Lehigh Valley was well-represented in LTAP participation across the state, and if Lehigh Valley municipalities participated in these trainings more than any other region. Mr. Hite noted that this was correct, and he shared that he presented the successes of Lehigh Valley's LTAP tech assist program at the LTAP Annual Conference in September. He hopes to expand this program and ensure that the Lehigh Valley continues to be a leader for LTAP across the state. Mr. Molchany asked if counties and municipalities have opportunities to request trainings from LTAP on topics that are needed. Mr. Hite stated that municipalities and counties should contact him to submit a request for a new training or a tech assist. Mr. McClure asked if there were any additional questions on Mr. Hite's presentation and there were none.

New Business

INFORMATION ITEM: LANTA Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan FY2022 Performance and FY2023 Goals

Mr. Cotter presented LANTA's Transit Asset Management (TAM) Plan Performance and Targets, which is a federally mandated plan. The TAM is reviewed annually to report on performance and provide updated targets to the MPO. Mr. Cotter explained the three categories of assets that LANTA owns and reports on: revenue vehicles (LANTA buses and LANTA vans), service vehicles, and facilities. Each vehicle category showed a 2022 target percentage of assets that have met or exceeded their useful life benchmark, the 2022 performance percentage of assets that met or exceeded their useful life benchmark, the difference, and the 2023 performance target percentage. The facilities category showed the percent of facilities rated 3 or below on the condition scale with the 2022 target percentage, 2022 performance percentage, the difference, and the 2023 target percentage. Mr. Cotter reported that all LANTA assets performed better than their target except for automobiles, as LANTA has moved away from having sedans in their fleet. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions from members and the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION/ACTION ITEM: Statewide TAM Plan and Associated LVTS-LANTA Memorandum of Understanding

Mr. Cotter noted that LANTA is a part of the Statewide TAM Plan, the current iteration of which began in 2022. PennDOT's Bureau of Public Transportation coordinates this plan. A memorandum of understanding (MOU) between the LVTS and LANTA needs to be signed, and this MOU states that LANTA will provide annual updates to the performance and targets to the LVTS. Last month, the Technical Committee voted to move the plan forward to the Coordinating Committee for approval. Mr. Cotter noted that the LVPC's Executive Committee, which authorizes agreements entered into and managed by LVPC, voted at its October 20 meeting to enter into the MOU pending consideration by the Coordinating Committee.

Mr. McClure asked for a motion to approve the LVTS-LANTA Memorandum of Understanding. Mr. Molchany made the motion to approve the LVTS-LANTA Memorandum of Understanding, and Mr. O'Neil seconded the motion. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from members. Mr. O'Neil commented that the TAM plan supports LANTA's annual funding requests by showing that LANTA is meeting its goals outlined in the plan. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from the public, and there were none. Ms. Bradley called for the vote, and the motioned carried.

ACTION ITEM: LANTA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Safety Performance Targets

Mr. Cotter reviewed LANTA's Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) Safety Performance Targets. He explained the purpose the PTASP and the requirements of the Federal Transit Administration. The data reviewed in the presentation was collected in 2019, 2020, and 2021. LANTA buses and paratransit had no fatalities during the reporting period, and the goal for fatalities remains at zero. On average, there were 16 injuries a year on LANTA buses and 0.067 injuries on paratransit during the reporting period, which amounts to less than one injury per 100,000 miles for both types, and the goal is to decrease injuries by 10%. LANTA buses had an average 11 safety events per year and paratransit had an average of 1.67 safety events per year during the reporting period, which include accidents and/or incidents that require towing. Less than one safety event occurred per 100,000 miles, and the goal is to decrease safety events by 10% for both types. System reliability data showed that, on average, buses travelled 10,479 miles between vehicle failures and paratransit vehicles travelled 27,948 miles between vehicle failures during the reporting period. The goal is to increase system reliability by 10%.

Mr. McClure asked for a motion to approve the LANTA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, Safety Performance Targets. Mr. Hopkins made a motion to approve the LANTA Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan, Safety Performance Targets, seconded by Mr. Molchany. McClure asked for any questions or comments from the members and the public. Mr. Molchany asked to clarify if the paratransit vehicles were those that were requested by individuals to receive service, and Mr. Cotter confirmed that they are. Mr. O'Neil added that the paratransit services are operated by a contractor, who is required to report all of their safety information for these reports. Mr. Molchany asked if the numbers presented were impacted by LANTA's relationship with Carbon County. Mr. O'Neil noted that the numbers presented do include Carbon County data, but the impact is not significant. Mr. McClure asked if there were any additional questions or comments from members or the public, and there were none. Mr. McClure asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion carried.

ITEM FOR CONSIDERATION: Request to add the Glendon Hill Bridge to the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Cotter noted that, during the September 21 Technical Committee meeting, Mr. Hopkins noted the advancing deterioration of the Glendon Hill Bridge, the only open bridge to Hugh Moore Park, the Delaware and Lehigh National Heritage Corridor's National Canal Museum and offices, and the City's Bike Skills Course. As a result of this discussion, PennDOT and the LVPC followed up with Mr. Hopkins, who then submitted a formal request for the advancement of the bridge onto the new Transportation Improvement Program. Ms. Bradley followed up with a formal review of the request per federal guidance. Both letters were included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Hopkins reaffirmed Mr. Cotter's statements about the importance of the bridge and summarized its needs. Mr. Hopkins noted that the City of Easton had raised \$900,000 for the repairs needed, but that the cost of the repairs had increased significantly. Mr. Hopkins introduced Mr. Barndt, the City's contracted engineer, who has extensive knowledge about the bridge and its needs. Mr. Barndt gave a technical explanation as to the repairs needed and the cost estimate for the work. The work includes structural steel repairs, a blast cleaning, a coating to prevent further deterioration, and miscellaneous repairs. Mr. Barndt asked if there were any technical questions for the project that he could answer.

Mr. Rebert noted that the cost estimate for the project was \$2.8 million, and asked Mr. Hopkins to clarify how much money the City has available for the project. Mr. Hopkins confirmed that the City has \$900,000 available for the project. Mr. Rebert noted that the funding request was about \$1.9 million to complete the project. Mr. Rebert asked what the expected let date for the project was, and Mr. Hopkins noted that the City was considering Summer 2024. Mr. Molchany asked Mr. Hopkins if the bridge renovation proposed would mitigate concerns about the bridge for the next 20 years, and Mr. Hopkins said it would. He noted

that, at some point, the bridge will end its useful life but, for the time being, the City intends to follow Mr. Barndt's recommendations and make this investment to extend the life of the existing bridge by 20 years. Mr. Barndt confirmed this statement and provided a technical explanation. Mr. Molchany thanked Mr. Hopkins, offered his support, and wanted to make sure that the Committees understood what the next phase for the bridge project would be.

Ms. Bradley outlined the formal review letter that was submitted by the LVPC. Because the project is already in the Long Range Transportation Plan's mid-range portion, the request simply advances the project as we move into the mid-range of the plan. There is a need to increase the funding allocation listed in the plan. Ms. Bradley noted that the D+L trail is a designated commuter corridor in FutureLV: The Regional Plan, which makes it a high-priority land trail. The trail is also noted in the Parks, Recreation, Open Space + Scenic Plan, which is consistent with Northampton County's Livable Landscapes Plan. Ms. Bradley reiterated that the bridge is the only access point to the National Canal Museum and Hugh Moore Park. There were five policies in FutureLV: The Regional Plan that were consistent with this project, which are listed in her letter.

Mr. Molchany asked if this project would be eligible to use a line item in the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) that is designated for unknown needs. Mr. Rebert confirmed that funding would be allocated from the Bridge Off Network (BOF) line item of the TIP. Mr. Rebert noted that PennDOT would be able to support project funding in 2024/2025. Mr. Molchany asked if Mr. Hopkins' intended let date lined up with the LVTS' ability to provide funds for the project, given the fiscal constraints of the TIP. Mr. Rebert stated that it would, and that an earlier let date would be better because the current TIP will be closing out in September 2024. Mr. Molchany wanted to confirm that Mr. Hopkins should plan for a let date as soon as possible to secure funding, and Mr. Rebert confirmed that any time from October 2023 – early 2024 would be best. Mr. Hopkins noted that this timeline should work. Mr. Rebert stated that there is not a project manager officially assigned to the project, but that help is available to navigate the clearance process. Mr. Hopkins stated that he believed that the first step in the project process is to move forward with the proposal from Mr. Barndt for the project, using local funds at this stage.

Mr. McClure asked if the LVTS needed to formally take action to add the Glendon Hill Bridge Project to the TIP. Ms. Bradley said that formal action was not needed at this time, and that the next step in the process is to add it to the fiscal constraints chart. Once the project has been added to the fiscal constraints chart, the LVTS will have a formal vote. Mr. McClure asked if there was an expected timeline for when the fiscal constraints chart would be updated. Mr. Mosca noted that this project will need to be presented to PennDOT's Program Management committee for approval before request action can be taken by the LVTS. Mr. Rebert noted that this process should not hold up the design element of the project. Mr. McClure noted that it seemed there was consensus among members that the LVTS would move ahead with the Glendon Hill Bridge project; Mr. Rebert and Mr. Molchany agreed.

Mr. Cotter asked if there were any other questions from members and the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Public Engagement and Participation

Mr. Hare shared that PennDOT has created and will continue to create Grant Alerts for competitive grant programs made available through the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. The goal for the Grant Alerts is to ensure that all Pennsylvania agencies are prepared to apply to programs for which they are eligible. Grant Alerts provide basic background information about the grant including eligibility, application due dates, project timeframes and PennDOT's areas of emphasis.

Mr. Assad shared that PennDOT is now accept applications for Multimodal Transportation Grants to promote transportation alternatives and improve pedestrian safety. Applications will be accepted until 4 PM on November 14.

Mr. Assad shared that the most recent Business Cycle column focused growth management in the region, what municipalities can do to manage growth, and what strategies the LVPC and communities across the region are using to control it. Mr. Assad also shared that the most recent Plan Lehigh Valley radio show hosted Lehigh County Commissioner Geoff Brace to discuss HB 2768, which looks to give some power back to the municipalities where the development is happening.

Mr. Assad reminded participants that the LVPC's 9th Annual Outlook + Awards will be held on November 15 from 8 AM to 10 PM at Lehigh University's Iacocca Conference Center.

Mr. Hite reviewed the upcoming virtual and in-person classes through the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). Upcoming virtual classes include: Approved Products for Local Roads (11/3, 11 AM – noon), Guiderail Drop-In Session (12/1, 11 AM – noon), Bridge and Culvert Inspections (12/13, 8 AM – 11 AM). Upcoming in-person classes include: Winter Maintenance, City of Allentown (11/9, 8 AM – noon); Winter Maintenance, South Whitehall Township (12/17, 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 November 16, 2022 at 9 AM, and that the next Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting will be held December 21, 2022 at 9 AM. Mr. Molchany made a motion to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned.