



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

Planning for the Future of Lehigh and Northampton Counties at 961 Marcon Blvd., Ste 310, Allentown, PA 18109 ■ (610) 264-4544 ■ lvpc@lvpc.org ■ www.lvpc.org

**Lehigh Valley Transportation Study
Minutes from the Wednesday, August 17, 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

Ryan Meyer	LNAA
Becky Bradley, AICP	LVPC
Matthew Tuerk	City of Allentown
Darlene Heller, AICP (Alt)	City of Bethlehem
Salvatore Panto	City of Easton
Jennifer Ruth	PennDOT District 5
Jim Mosca	PennDOT Central Office

LVTS Coordinating Committee

Matthew Tuerk	City of Allentown
Salvatore Panto	City of Easton
Lamont McClure	Northampton County
Mike Rebert	PennDOT District 5
Jim Mosca (Alt)	PennDOT Central Office
Becky Bradley, AICP	LVPC
Michael Alkhal (Alt)	City of Bethlehem
Rick Molchany (Alt)	Lehigh County
Owen O'Neill	LANTA

Members Absent: Brendan Cotter, William Reynolds, David Hopkins, Phillips Armstrong, Brian Hare, Thomas Stoudt

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

Public Present: Lee Rackus, Amanda Leindecker, Sarah Cassi, Brian Harman, Christine Frey, David Petrik, Matt Szuchyt, Andrew Kleiner, Liz Rosencrans, Heather Heeter, Nancy Wilt, Ralph Eberhardt, Geoff Brace, Elie Jabbour, Scott Slingerland, Anna Stackhouse, Joshua Ortiz, Bill Laird, Rich Ames, Dawn Godshall, Crystal Heshmat, Mick Dee, David Rostron, Sarit Laschinsky, Lisa Amy, Jay McGee, Kerry Cos, Amy Cozze, Gary Asteak, Bernie Bydlon, Navarro Wright, Steve Samuelson, Jennie Louwerse, Tori Morgan, Steve Glickman, Adam Rust, Evan Jones, Justin Backover, Anna Stackhouse,

Hayden Mitman, Tom JeBran, Steve Repasch, Scott Vottero, John Gallagher, Ronald Young, Brian Miller, Kurt Derr, Anna Zawierucha, Bob Black, Jim Steele, Maurice Wells, Jeff Rai, Seemon Georges

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Mosca noted that David Alas will be taking over as the LVTS Technical Committee voting member and liaison from Central Office as of the September 2022 LVTS Technical Committee meeting. Mr. Mosca will remain involved with the LVTS as the alternate for Mr. Hare on the Coordinating Committee.

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. Meyer stated that the last Technical Committee was held jointly with the Coordinating Committee on June 15, 2022. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on.

- Minutes from the May 18, 2022, meeting
- TIP Amendment #1 for 309 & Tilghman St Interchange Reconstruction
- TIP Amendment # 2 for US Route 22 from Farmersville Rd to State Route 512
- Adoption of the 2023-2026 Air Quality Conformity Analysis and Resolution
- Adoption of the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Self-Certification Resolution
- Adoption of the LVTS procedures for the 2023-2026 TIP Revisions
- Adoption of the 2023-2026 LVTS Transportation Improvement Program
- Approval of the Rescheduling of the Joint Meeting of the Technical and Coordinating Committees for October
- Adjournment

Mr. Meyer asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Technical Committee Meeting on June 15, 2022. Mr. Mosca made the motion for approval of the Technical Committee Meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Bradley. Mr. Meyer asked for any questions or comments from the members and the public. Hearing none, Mr. Meyer 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 June 15, 2022. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on.

- Minutes from the April 20, 2022, meeting
- TIP Amendment #1 for 309 & Tilghman St Interchange Reconstruction
- TIP Amendment # 2 for US Route 22 from Farmersville Rd to State Route 512
- Adoption of the 2023-2026 Air Quality Conformity Analysis and Resolution
- Adoption of the 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Self-Certification Resolution
- Adoption of the LVTS procedures for the 2023-2026 TIP Revisions
- Adoption of the 2023-2026 LVTS Transportation Improvement Program
- Approval of the Rescheduling of the Joint Meeting of the Technical and Coordinating Committees for October
- Adjournment

Mr. McClure asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Coordinating Committee Meeting on June 15, 2022. Mr. Molchany made the motion for approval of the Technical Committee Meeting minutes, seconded by Ms. Bradley. 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: Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis Kick-Off

Mr. Meyer stated that PennDOT Deputy Secretary Jennie Louwerse made a presentation on the *State Rail Plan* to the Technical Committee at its May 18, 2022 meeting. Deputy Secretary Louwerse also conducted a special informational session on the potential and legal processes for a passenger rail system for the members of the Technical and Coordinating Committees on June 30, 2022. During this informational session, Deputy Secretary Louwerse offered to work with the LVTS to pursue a passenger rail analysis that meets federal standards, which would be the first study of this type in the region. Mr. Meyer transitioned the meeting to Deputy Secretary Louwerse to present more information on the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis.

Deputy Secretary Louwerse noted that PennDOT and the LVTS will work together closely throughout the Passenger Rail Analysis process. Deputy Secretary Louwerse also acknowledged that there is a lot of excitement around federal funding opportunities for passenger rail. To obtain this funding, it is important to have a strong data foundation to understand what it would take to reestablish passenger rail service. Establishing this foundation is what this passenger rail analysis intends to do.

Deputy Secretary Louwerse referred to Amtrak's 2035 Vision, which identified three corridors in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: Lackawanna (Scranton), Allentown and Reading. A similar study has been conducted in Reading, and additional analysis is being conducted in the Lackawanna corridor. PennDOT has agreed to do this analysis to make sure that the building blocks to start passenger rail are consistent, and to provide the LVTS and locally elected officials a full understanding of what it would take, how long it would take, and a magnitude of cost. DOT- and Federal Rail Administration (FRA)-qualified consultants will be identified to do the analysis, which will be consistent with the *State Rail Plan* and *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. PennDOT will pay for the analysis and oversee the consultants, and the LVTS will be an active partner throughout the process.

Deputy Secretary Louwerse discussed the differences between intercity rail, commuter rail and freight rail, which could influence who the operator of the potential rail service would be. The analysis will consider these and other factors at a high level. Most current concepts for potential passenger rail in the Lehigh Valley also involve sharing rail with freight rail, which brings its own set of challenges and additional coordination. All of these factors will be documented in the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis.

Deputy Secretary Louwerse stated that the analysis will provide decision makers and elected officials with adequate information on the potential for passenger rail, coordinate with partners (New Jersey Transit, SEPTA, LANTA, Amtrak, and others), and determine the steps that would need to happen to get passenger rail up and running in the Lehigh Valley. The analysis will also consider the capital and long-term operating costs associated with a potential passenger rail service, as well as a menu of options on various mobility choices. Deputy Secretary Louwerse emphasized that PennDOT wants to make sure that the analysis is relevant and helpful so that regional leaders are able to make well-informed decisions.

Deputy Secretary Louwerse noted that there are currently two other recent passenger rail studies in the Commonwealth (Reading and Scranton), consideration for rail improvements in Erie, and for expansion of rail service in Western Pennsylvania. The Reading to Philadelphia Rail Study estimates cost of service at \$818 – 820 million to start. The Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis will serve as a jumping off point for how the process will work and key steps to take to ensure adequate funding. The analysis will provide a solid foundation for the region to understand whether passenger rail is feasible and what would need to happen to establish it in the Lehigh Valley.

Mr. Meyer thanked Deputy Secretary Louwerse for her presentation and her collaboration with Ms. Bradley on this project. Mr. Meyer asked for questions from Technical Committee members and there

were none. Mr. Meyer asked for questions from Coordinating Committee members. Mr. McClure thanked Deputy Secretary Louwrese on behalf of the LVTS for securing funding to conduct the analysis and voiced his support for the analysis and the provision of passenger rail to the Lehigh Valley. Mr. McClure asked Deputy Secretary Louwrese to explain more about what the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) requires and how this relates a formal submission of interest to the agency. Deputy Secretary Louwrese explained that the FRA is responsible for the distribution of rail funding. Overall, there is \$66 billion available for rail in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, but that money is divided out between Amtrak and different discretionary grants. FRA has put out a call for Expressions of Interest (EOI) for new service, reinstated service, and expansions of service. In short, FRA is trying to gauge how many projects across the country they will see at the Notice of Funding Opportunity (NOFO), which will be released by the end of this calendar year. This first round of funding will likely choose 3-5 projects nationwide, and Deputy Secretary Louwrese believes that projects chosen will have advanced studies and may be closer to construction. She believes that there will be additional opportunities to apply for funding going forward, so conducting the analysis now and collecting this data will be helpful for future cycles of funding. Mr. McClure asked Deputy Secretary Louwrese to clarify that the LVTS is not missing an opportunity, and she confirmed that conducting this analysis will not prevent the LVTS from securing funding for a potential passenger rail project, but rather create a more solid foundation for future funding opportunities. Deputy Secretary Louwrese noted that, in her opinion, applying for funding without conducting this type of analysis would not score well with the FRA. Mr. McClure thanked Deputy Secretary Louwrese for her answer.

Mr. Molchany expressed his enthusiasm for the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis. He asked if the analysis would include climate action benefits of rail versus vehicle traffic. Mr. Molchany noted that the passenger rail system was not financially successful in the 1960s, but that today there has been a rebirth of interest in passenger rail, largely because of the climate improvement implications. He asked if the study will show what might improve as a result of passenger rail, as the federal government requires the LVTS to make sure that our transportation projects do not contribute to a lessening of air quality. Deputy Secretary Louwrese noted that the analysis would not include a detailed air quality study, but that it would list an air quality analysis as one of the next steps. She noted that this is typical. She also shared that all transit across the globe is subsidized, and now there are federal monies designated for transportation enhancements including passenger rail, where there were less prior to the passage of the IJJA. Deputy Secretary Louwrese stated that rail transit is good for the economy and the environment and agreed with Mr. Molchany's statements. Mr. Molchany followed up his question with a statement on how the connection between Lehigh Valley International Airport and Newark has shown us that bus can be a viable option to provide a connection to rail. He asked if scenarios like these, where bus is a connector to other transit modes, will be included as options in the rail analysis. Deputy Secretary Louwrese stated that these scenarios sounded like feasible alternatives that may come up during the analysis. The Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis will outline the steps needed to secure potential passenger rail service to the region, as well as other short- and long-term options for increased mobility that will consider LANTA and other regional transit partners. Deputy Secretary Louwrese also stated that increased use of public transit has environmental benefits and may lessen roadway congestion for some, but could lead to other development challenges that could increase population and lead to more traffic or all types generally. She shared that PennDOT and the LVTS will also work together to see how long some of these improvements would take and what the magnitude of cost would be. Mr. Molchany said that there have been previous studies conducted, and that this study will provide a clean perspective that looks to the future. He stated that it was sensible for this study to be completed in a timely manner to set the Lehigh Valley's transportation agenda. Mr. Molchany thanked Deputy Secretary Louwrese for her assistance with this project.

Mr. Meyer asked if any other members of the Coordinating Committee had questions for Deputy Secretary Louwrese, and there were none. Mr. Meyer asked if there were any questions from the public. Mr. Black identified himself as a representative of the Lehigh Valley Partnership, an affiliation of the larger

employers in the Lehigh Valley, which has had a great interest in this project. Mr. Black asked for clarification of the process, specifically around determining whether the region submits an EOI or moves forward in other ways. He also asked for an update on the Reading project, since that study was already completed. Mr. Black further asked what the timetable was for completing the passenger rail analysis. Deputy Secretary Louwarse said that the scope of work was currently being drafted and that she hoped to have the consultants under agreement within the next 45 days to start the kickoff. There will be outreach efforts for the analysis, including connecting back with the LVTS regularly. Deputy Secretary Louwarse anticipated that the analysis will take 12-14 months to complete, and that this timeframe will not impact any potential federal funding sources. The next steps will depend on the analysis itself, and PennDOT will be a supportive partner regardless of which route the LVTS takes with passenger rail. Funding and the ability to move projects will be a part of the equation, but the collaboration throughout the process will help to determine the best option. Submitting an EOI to FRA at this time would be premature. Deputy Secretary Louwarse provided an update on the Reading Area Passenger Rail Analysis, which was completed in 2020. Chester, Montgomery, and Berks Counties have formed a transit authority, and will be meeting soon to discuss next steps. She also noted that, similar to the Lehigh Valley, many of the Reading-area considerations include sharing track with freight railroads. A Rail Traffic Controller (RTC) will need to be done by the freight carrier to ensure that the addition of passenger service will not negatively impact either freight or passenger rail service. Because railroads are privately owned, getting an agreement with the freight carrier is critical. The next step for the Reading area is to enter into an agreement and analysis with Norfolk Southern, which can be a lengthy process. Mr. Black asked Deputy Secretary Louwarse if she would advise the LVTS whether or not she would recommend the Lehigh Valley project for funding as part of the analysis. Deputy Secretary Louwarse noted that federal legislation, the Passenger Rail Investment and Improvement Act of 2008 (PRIIA), dictates that passenger rail service under 750 miles within a state is the financial responsibility of the state. The Pennsylvania service from Pittsburgh to Harrisburg to Philadelphia to New York, and the Keystone service from Harrisburg to Philadelphia to New York are less than 750, and PennDOT subsidizes those services and has a vested stake in how things run. Before COVID, the Commonwealth was subsidizing Amtrak around \$16 million each year, and that has increased to \$26 million since the pandemic. Deputy Secretary Louwarse stated that the Commonwealth does not have any additional state funds to subsidize any new rail routes, regardless of their location within the Commonwealth. If a project is selected for funding in the new federal program under the IIJA, it is eligible for 100% of capital costs. The federal government would pay 100% of the subsidy for the first year of service, 67% for the second year of service, and 33% for the third year of service. The intent is to drum up service, but there is no transit system in the world that is 100% fare recovery. The subsidy for a potential passenger rail service would need to come from the Commonwealth, the counties, the region, etc. This is a challenge that the LVTS and PennDOT will need to work through together. PennDOT does not submit EOIs for this program, but does provide feedback to the FRA and the US Senators' office on the projects. Deputy Secretary Louwarse expressed enthusiasm for passenger rail on behalf of the governor, the Secretary of PennDOT and herself, but noted that there are financial constraints. She also said that, if the LVTS submitted an EOI today, there would be a lack of data needed to go after funding, and that the upcoming Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Analysis will provide that data.

Mr. Meyer thanked the Deputy Secretary for her participation in the Question and Answer session. Deputy Secretary Louwarse read a question from the meeting chat: "Is the existing rail service the state currently subsidizes for \$26 million seeking any of the new federal dollars?". This question was asked by Representative Steve Samuelson. Deputy Secretary Louwarse answered that PennDOT will be looking to use some federal monies to support the subsidy, but not with this particular program for expansion service. The state is focusing on other projects that are already in the *State Rail Plan* that need to be completed, and the challenge is making sure that there are state dollars to match federal dollars. Deputy Secretary Louwarse noted that this is an amazing opportunity to actualize projects in the *State Rail Plan* and improve safety along the corridor. She also noted that the \$26 million subsidy needs to be state dollars as it is the federally-required match for passenger rail systems. Mr. Meyer again thanked the

Deputy Secretary for her participation in the question and answer session. Mr. McClure also thanked the Deputy Secretary for her work and support for the passenger rail analysis, and for securing the funding for it.

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. No questions were asked.

PRESENTATION ITEM: PennDOT District 5-0 Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside and Multimodal Transportation Status Report

Mr. Vottero highlighted the following items:

- Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside
 - Broadway and Delaware Avenue, Fountain Hill Borough
 - Martin Luther King, Jr. Drive, City of Allentown
 - Two Rivers Trail Gap 9A, Northampton County
 - CAT Bike Education, Coalition for Appropriate Transportation
 - Bogert's Bridge Rehabilitation, City of Allentown
 - Coopersburg Streetscape, Phase 6, Coopersburg Borough
 - 100 Steps Restoration Project, Slatington Borough
 - Jordan Creek Greenway to Covered Bridge Park, South Whitehall Township
 - Ironton Rail Trail Trailhead Improvement Project, Whitehall Township
 - Ironton Rail Trail Corsswalk Improvements, North Whitehall Township
 - Easton Pedestrian Safety Project Phase 3, Lafayette College, City of Easton
- Multimodal Projects
 - Hamilton Boulevard, Lower Macungie Township
 - Main Street/SR 873 & Walnut Street Improvements, Slatington Borough
 - Wood Avenue, City of Easton
 - Iron Works Streetscape, Catasauqua Borough
 - Wilson Borough Improvements, Wilson Borough
 - Air Products Global Headquarters, Upper Macungie Township
 - 15th Street Traffic Signal Improvements, City of Allentown
 - SR 222 and Grange Road, Upper Macungie Township
 - South Church and Hickory Street Connections, Macungie Borough

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

INFORMATION ITEM: PennDOT Transportation Improvement Program Administrative Actions

Ms. Ruth noted that, since the June 15, 2022 LVTS Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting, there were 17 administrative actions and one statewide administrative actions. She noted that these actions could be found on pages 19-24 of the meeting packet, asked if there were any questions, and there were none.

ACTION ITEM: Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendments

Ms. Ruth said that there was an e-ballot distributed to LVTS Technical and Coordinating Committee members for the Proposed TIP Amendment #1 because of timing requirements to obligate federal funds before the end of the federal fiscal year (FFY). This ballot was distributed for an increase to the construction phase of the Cementon Bridge project. The proposed TIP amendment included adding funds in FFY 2022 and FFY 2023 for \$5,768,675 to the current 2021-2024 TIP to replace the Cementon Bridge that carries SR 329 over the Lehigh River in Whitehall Township, Lehigh County and Northampton Borough, Northampton County.

Proposed TIP Amendment #1 consists of programmed projects to fund the Cementon Bridge project by:

- Assigning \$499,655 from the 309 and Tilghman Street interchange reconstruction project, of which \$399,724 is STP funds and \$99,931 in 581 funds.
- Assigning \$1,441,740 from the Gap Bridge repairs final design phase, of which \$670,592 of NHPP funds and \$167,648 in 581 funds in FFY 2022, as well as \$482,800 in NHPP funds and \$120,700 in 581 funds from FFY 2023.
- Assigning \$200,000 in STP funds from the Beth-Bath Pike over Monocacy Creek final design phase, and its match of \$50,000 of 185 funds was returned to the line item. This project is fully funded on the Draft 2023 TIP.
- Other sources are various de-obligations returned to the region for reassignment in a total of \$1,139,393 in STP funds and \$554,228 in STU funds.
- The line-item reserve was used as a source for \$1,376,229, of which \$481,798 in NHPP funds and \$240,461 in STP funds and \$653,970 in 581 funds were assigned in FFY 2022.
- There is also an anticipated utility contribution of \$557,430 which is for incorporated work and is anticipated to be paid by UGI, Verizon, Zayo, Coplay-Whitehall Sewer Authority and Northampton Borough Municipal Authority for their specific work in the utility agreement.

Ms. Bradley read out the votes from the e-ballot, noting that all members of the Coordinating Committee and most members of the Technical Committee voted yes. There were no negative votes or abstentions.

Mr. Meyer asked for a motion to affirm the email ballots for the Cementon bridge project by the Technical Committee. Ms. Bradley motioned to approve and Ms. Heller seconded. Mr. Meyer asked for questions from members and the public, and there were none. Ms. Bradley called for the vote and the motion carried.

Mr. McClure asked for a motion to affirm the email ballots for the Cementon bridge project by the Coordinating Committee. Mr. Molchany motioned to approve and Mr. Tuerk seconded. Mr. McClure asked for questions from members. Mr. Molchany asked Ms. Ruth if the \$557,430 to be paid by the utility companies had been discussed with the utility companies. Ms. Ruth replied that the utility agreements are in place with the companies, as those agreements need to be in place before the plans, Specifications and Estimates (PS&E) packet is put out to bid. Mr. McClure asked if there were any other questions from members or the public on the Cementon bridge TIP amendment and there were none. Ms. Bradley called for the vote and the motion carried.

Proposed TIP Amendment #2 is for the Riverside Drive project in Whitehall Township and the City of Allentown, Lehigh County for the Preliminary Engineering (PE) phase in FFY 2023. The proposed amendment will assign \$300,000 in federal RAISE Grant funds to allow the preliminary engineering tasks, such as scoping, surveying and data collection, to commence. This is an amendment to be able to start work on this project and get the consultant under agreement before the TIP expires.

Mr. Meyer asked for questions from the Technical Committee and the public on the proposed amendment, and there were none. Ms. Heller made a motion to accept Proposed TIP Amendment #2 for the Technical Committee and Ms. Bradley seconded the motion. Ms. Bradley called for the vote and the motion carried.

Mr. Tuerk made a motion for the Coordinating Committee to accept the Proposed TIP Amendment #2 and Mr. Molchany seconded that motion. Mr. McClure asked to clarify that the amendment is being added because it was not included in the original TIP. Ms. Bradley confirmed that this was true, and these are new dollars awarded to the region by the USDOT through the RAISE grant program. Mr. McClure asked for further clarification on why the Technical Committee put this amendment forward. Ms. Ruth explained that this amendment was added now to allow the design to start sooner rather than waiting until the 2023 TIP is active. This will also allow construction to begin within the timeframe that the RAISE Grant requires.

The 2023-2026 TIP will also need to be amended to have the Riverside Drive project added to it because it is not currently programmed on the Draft 2023-2026 TIP. PennDOT has moved forward with getting a consultant for the project, but is unable to act without the money in place. Mr. McClure noted that there were several long-standing Northampton County priorities that have not been included in the TIP. Suggestions for amendments to the TIP, including Airport Road, have been put forward but have not yet materialized. Northampton County was very supportive of the RAISE Grant and the influx of federal monies to match private funding for this project. Mr. McClure then asked how much LVTS was anticipated to contribute to the Riverside Drive project. Ms. Bradley stated that all the funding associated with the Riverside Drive project is associated with the RAISE grant award, including this initial \$300,000 for preliminary engineering. By way of example, Transportation Alternative Set-Aside funds and At-Grade Rail Crossing improvement funds also get added to the TIP as various applicants are awarded competitive grants. This is the same process. The RAISE Grant funding will be added in stages because of the way that the grant works. Ms. Bradley restated that this does not take money out of the regional formula allocation of funding. Mr. McClure thanked Ms. Bradley for her explanation. Mr. Molchany noted that all added opportunities outside of the regional allocation are evaluated by the Technical Committee first and then recommends to the Coordinating Committee for final regional action. There are typically multiple amendments adding grant award funds to the TIP. Competitive dollars are additive to the regional TIP and do not detract from the formula regional monies. Mr. Molchany asked for confirmation. Ms. Bradley confirmed that Mr. Molchany was correct. Mr. McClure asked if there were any other questions or comments from Coordinating Committee members and the public, and there were none. Ms. Bradley called for the vote and the motion carried.

ACTION ITEM: New Metropolitan Planning Organization Requirements for Coordination and Transportation System Performance Management

Ms. Bradley noted that the federal government requires Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) to set certain performance measure targets through the Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (Map-21). Under this legislation, the LVTS periodically reviews existing targets for things like safety, truck time reliability etc. Recently, all Pennsylvania MPOs have been required to adopt two new performance measures. The LVTS is also required to coordinate with different partners when setting these targets including PennDOT, Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission (DVRPC), Northeastern Pennsylvania Alliance (NEPA), and the Reading Area Transit Study (RATS). In addition, the LVTS is now an official planning partner for New Jersey Department of Transportation (NJDOT) and the North Jersey Transportation Planning Agency (NJTPA), which is new this year and requires a different level of coordination with these and future measures. The LVTS is connected with these planning partners because the Allentown Urbanized Area goes beyond the Northampton and Lehigh County borders.

Ms. Bradley reviewed the system performance measures and highlighted two new measures, Annual Hours of Peak Hour Excessive Delay (PHED) per capita and Percentage of Non-Single Occupancy Vehicle (Non-SOV) Travel. Considerations for PHED and Non-SOV targets include working from home, driving to work in place of transit, traffic volumes growing more than population, moderate population and employment growth, rising gasoline prices and inflation, e-commerce and goods movement, existing projects that may impact these targets over the second performance period (2022-2025), and other factors including data updates and corrections.

Ms. Bradley noted that the PHED calculations reviewed traffic congestion measured by annual hours of PHED per capita on the National Highway System (NHS). The threshold for excessive delay is based on the travel time at 20 mph or 60% of the posted speed limit travel time, whichever is greater and is measured in 15-minute intervals. Peak travel hours are defined as 6 – 10 AM and 3 – 7 PM on weekdays. The total excessive delay metric is weighted by vehicle volumes and occupancy. The targeted approach for the PHED measure was to develop conservative targets, which reflect that recent trends, including uncertainties with COVID-19, inflation, long-term working from home trends, and energy/supply chain disruptions, may not be representative of future conditions. Construction projects that are anticipated

within the next four years in the Lehigh Valley were considered because they may degrade traffic operations and impact the National Highway System. Historic data for the Allentown Urbanized Area in the Federal Highway Administration's National Performance Management Research Data Set (FHWA NPRMDS) travel time tool makes it difficult to compare 2021 values to historic years. Two-year and four-year targets assume the same values, and the four-year targets can be updated at the mid-term report. Ms. Bradley showed a map of NHS roads in the Allentown Urbanized Area that showed delay levels per capita in 2021. The map was made using the FHWA NPRMDS tool. Routes with high delay per capita include Route 22, Route 33, the Northeast Extension of the PA Turnpike, Route 100, and many arterial roads. The NPRMDS tool was also used to create the 5-year average delay baseline, and this set the proposed target of 8.6 hours of PHED. There was improvement over 2020 and 2021, but that was during the COVID-19 pandemic. A chart was shown comparing historic PHED data from 2017-2021 compared with the proposed two-year and four-year targets of 8.6 hours.

Ms. Bradley reviewed the Non-SOV Travel measure calculations, which were made using the 5-Year Estimate for "Commuting to Work" totaled by mode, as of August 15 the year Performance Report is due, which comes from the U.S. Census American Community Survey (ACS). Historical Non-SOV data on overall 5-year averages was shown. The targeted approach for the Non-SOV measure was to develop conservative targets reflecting that recent trends, including uncertainties with COVID-19, inflation, long-term trends for working at home, and energy/supply chain disruptions, may not be representative of future conditions. COVID-19 impacts on work-at-home and transit commuting in 2020-2021 will be included in future ACS 5-year estimates throughout the performance period. A generalized approach was used for target determination using the Average Non-SOV 5-year ACS values for 2016-2020. Two-year and four-year targets assume the same values, and the four-year targets can be updated at the mid-term report. A chart was shown comparing historic Non-SOV data from 2012-2020 compared with the proposed two-year and four-year targets of 18.6%.

Ms. Bradley proposed adoption of the two new performance measure targets, as required by the USDOT. The proposed target for annual hours of PHED is 8.6 hours in 2023 and 2025, and the proposed target for percentage of Non-SOV Travel is 18.6%. The LVTS was required to forward these draft targets to the NJDOT and other planning partners by July 20 and did so. Partners are aware that these targets are in draft form and that the LVTS is considering them at this meeting. The agreement process has begun in anticipation of this meeting because a series of planning measures need to be completed to demonstrate coordination between the adjacent MPOs and the state DOTs. Ms. Bradley emphasized that working across state lines requires more time and that the regulatory compliance requirements have doubled. This has been a learning experience and a major difference in the amount of time needed and staff considerations. Ms. Bradley then requested adoption of the draft targets by the Technical Committee.

Mr. Meyer thanked Ms. Bradley for her presentation and her work on these targets. Mr. Meyer asked for questions and comments from the Technical Committee members. Mr. Mosca thanked Ms. Bradley and the LVPC staff for taking the lead and pulling the targets together across several planning areas. Mr. Mosca then made a motion for approval of the performance measure targets, and Ms. Bradley seconded the motion. Mr. Meyer asked if LVTS funding for projects would be impacted if the values for the metrics do not meet the targets. Ms. Bradley shared that the performance measure targets are set as overall goals, and need to be used when selecting projects for the Long-Range Transportation Plan and for the funding cycle in the TIP. These measures will need to be considered when making funding decisions moving forward. Mr. Hare confirmed Ms. Bradley's statement and that these measures would be included in statewide measures, as well. Ms. Bradley called for a vote and the motion carried.

Mr. O'Neil made a motion for the Coordinating Committee to accept the performance measure targets as set forward by the Technical Committee, and Mr. Molchany seconded the motion. Mr. McClure asked for questions or comments from members of the Coordinating Committee and the public, and there were none. Ms. Bradley called for a vote and the motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEM: Greenhouse Gas Measures Proposed Federal Rule Making

Ms. Bradley shared that the LVPC just completed a Greenhouse Gas Inventory for the region, and that report, which will be released in the coming months, may impact future performance measure targets. To help address the climate crisis, FHWA proposes to amend its regulations governing national performance management measures to require State DOTs and MPOs to establish declining carbon dioxide (CO₂) targets and to establish a method for the measurement and reporting of greenhouse gas emissions associated with transportation under the Highways title of the United States Code (U.S.C.). The proposed rule would not mandate the level of the targets, and State DOTs and MPOs would have flexibility to set targets that are appropriate for their communities and that work for their respective climate change and other policy priorities, as long as the targets would reduce emissions over time. The proposed rule would require State DOTs and MPOs that have NHS mileage within their state geographic boundaries and metropolitan planning area boundaries, respectively, to establish declining CO₂ emissions targets to reduce CO₂ emissions generated by on-road mobile sources relative to a reference year defined as calendar year 2021, that align with the Administration's net-zero targets as outlined in the national policy established under Executive orders entitled "Protecting Public Health and the Environment and Restoring Science to Tackle the Climate Crisis" and "Tackling the Climate Crisis at Home and Abroad" and at the Leaders Summit on Climate. The proposed rule would require MPOs serving urbanized areas with multiple MPOs to establish additional joint targets. The proposed rule also would require State DOTs and MPOs to biennially report on their progress in meeting the targets and require FHWA to assess significant progress toward achieving the targets. Comments to the proposed rulemaking must be received on or before October 13, 2022 and LVTS staff is reviewing the proposal to determine if comments are needed.

INFORMATION ITEM: Monthly Traffic Report

Mr. Hite noted that traffic across all four continuous traffic counters in the region increased in July. At the end of July, Route 22 between Airport Road and the Lehigh River Bridge showed 104,393 vehicles, Route 33 near Route 248 registered 79,490 vehicles, Interstate 78 near Route 309 reported 72,815 vehicles, and Route 309 near Coopersburg in Lehigh County had 38,127 vehicles. Mr. Hite also noted that two traffic counters collected classification data and showed that there 21,369 trucks on Interstate 78 near 309 and 14,277 trucks on Route 22 in July. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions about the traffic report and there were none.

New Business

INFORMATION ITEM: Pennsylvania National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Plan and Program

Mr. Hare reviewed the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) program's funding availability, including \$171.5 million in formula funding for PennDOT over a five-year period and \$2.5 billion in discretionary grants for charging and fueling infrastructure across all states. Funding from NEVI may be used for the installation and operation of electric vehicle (EV) charging, as well as the installation of traffic control devices used to provide directional information, signing, mapping, analysis of activities relating to charging infrastructure, etc.

Mr. Hare shared that formula funding through NEVI will flow through PennDOT and will focus primarily on Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs), which contain pending miles and ready status. Ready status on an AFC means that there is charging within 50 miles along the length of the interstate, and within one mile off the interstate. Once AFCs are more thoroughly built out, PennDOT will start to use the funding in other areas. Discretionary grants will be awarded to projects across the country that support AFC development and community alternative fuel projects. Half of the discretionary grant funding will support AFC development and half will support community alternative fuel projects. Eligible entities for these grants include states, local governments, planning agencies, transit and port authorities, and tribal governments. AFC projects must be publicly accessible along those corridors.

Mr. Hare noted that the NEVI funding is focused on publicly accessible fast charging, which will take 30 minutes for a 100-mile perimeter of service. The Combination Charging System (CCS) connector is the standard charging infrastructure, and can supply 150kw power per port. Per NEVI guidelines, at least four ports need to be built at each location, which also needs to be within one mile of the highway and within 50 miles of the next station.

Mr. Hare referred to a map of Pennsylvania's ready and pending AFCs. PennDOT has nominated corridors over six rounds that have been approved by FHWA. These corridors include all interstates; the only non-interstates nominated are portions of US 30, US 15, US 422, and US 1. Mr. Hare reviewed PennDOT's public outreach for NEVI and shared that PennDOT submitted a NEVI plan on July 29, which is currently under review by FHWA. Mr. Hare mentioned that there will be many more outreach opportunities in the future that will focus on next steps and moving ahead with electric vehicle infrastructure charging and the different funding programs. Mr. Hare mentioned that PennDOT's website is an excellent resource to find out more about electric vehicles and PennDOT's NEVI plan. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions for Mr. Hare and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: Public Engagement and Participation

Mr. Assad alerted municipal partners that PennDOT's Traffic Signal Technologies Grant Program will provide funding to modernize or upgrade existing traffic signals. This is a \$5 million grant program that opens September 1 and runs through September 30. No local match is required for the grant.

Ms. Bradley shared that the FHWA has a variety of funding programs out of the Bi-Partisan Infrastructure Law, and there will be more coming as a result of the Inflation Reduction Act. More information on these programs can be found at www.transportation.gov/dot-navigator

Mr. Assad shared that the most recent Business Cycle column focused on the public right-of-way, how it's used, and how it relates to our democracy. Mr. Assad also shared that the most recent Plan Lehigh Valley radio show hosted Mr. O'Neill to talk more about LANTA's burgeoning enhanced bus services and how fast convenient bus services is key to our future development plans.

Mr. Hite reviewed the upcoming virtual classes through the Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP). Upcoming classes include Road Safety Audits (August 30, 8 AM – noon), Residential Streets Sidewalk Design + Maintenance (September 1, 11 AM – noon), Equipment and Worker Safety (September 6, 8 AM – noon), Project Oversight (September 13, 8 AM – noon), Speed Limits and Speed Management (September 20, 8 AM – noon), Americans with Disabilities Act (September 27, 8 AM – noon). All are free and anyone can sign up at lvpc.org/ltap or contact Brian Hite.

Adjournment

Mr. McClure stated that the next Technical Committee meeting will be held on September 21, 2022 at 9 AM, and that the next Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting will be held October 26, 2022 at 9 AM. Mr. Molchany made a motion to adjourn and Ms. Bradley seconded the motion. The meeting was adjourned.