



# 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, April 19, 2023 Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting

Prior to the call 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, December 28, 2022.

Mr. Lamont McClure chaired the Coordinating Committee portion of the meeting, and Mr. Cotter chaired the Technical Committee portion of the agenda.

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
Mark Hartney (Alt)	City of Allentown
Darlene Heller (Alt)	City of Bethlehem
David Hopkins (Alt)	City of Easton
Jennifer Ruth	PennDOT District 5
David Alas	PennDOT Central Office

#### LVTS Coordinating Committee

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

**Members Absent:** Ryan Meyer, Matthew Tuerk, William Reynolds, Salvatore Panto, Thomas Stoudt

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

**Public Present:** Brian Miller, Christine Frey, Scott Harney, Ralph Eberhardt, Scott Slingerland, Amanda Leindecker, Scott Vottero, Evan Jones, Brian Harman, Bernie Bydlon, Vanessa Shamberg, Jeff Varrone, Michael Emili, Rich Ames, Lee Rackus, Seemon Georges, Mick Dee, Jeff Rai, Jason Cawrse

**Courtesy of the Floor**

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

### **Minutes**

Mr. Cotter stated that the last Technical Committee was held on March 15, 2023. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on.

- Minutes for the February 15, 2023, meeting
- Performance Measure 2 Pavement + Bridge Condition Target Setting
- Performance Measure 3 system Performance Reliability Target Setting
- US DEP Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program Letter of Intent
- Adjournment

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Technical Committee Meeting on March 15, 2023. Mr. Alas made the motion for approval of the Technical Committee Meeting minutes, and the motion was seconded by Ms. Ruth. Mr. Cotter asked for any questions or comments from the members and the public, and there were 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 February 15, 2023. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on.

- Minutes for the December 21, 2022, meeting
- TIP Amendment #1 – Cementon Bridge
- TIP Amendment #2 – LVTS Systemic Safety Improvements
- TIP Amendment #3 – LANTA Engine Overhaul (VOH) Program
- 2022-2024 Unified Planning Work Program Revisions
- Performance Measure 1 Safety Target Setting
- Adjournment

Mr. McClure asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the Coordinating Committee Meeting on February 15, 2023. Mr. O'Neil 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 Projects Status Report***

Mr. McClure highlighted the PennDOT District 5 Highway Projects Status Report on page 25 in the meeting packet. Mr. Vottero briefly reviewed projects with let dates in 2023, including:

- State Route 145 Safety Improvements, Allentown City
- Race Street, Catasauqua Borough
- State Route 248 Signal Improvements, Lehigh Township

Mr. McClure asked Mr. Vottero if he reviewed the project on SR 309. Mr. Vottero noted that he skipped that review because the let date is in April 2024. He said that PennDOT is currently working on permits for that project, and that right of way is still ongoing. Mr. McClure asked if there were additional questions from the committees or the public, and there were none.

#### ***INFORMATION ITEM: Riverside Drive – 30-Day Public Review and Comment Period***

Ms. Bradley noted that at the next joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting, the LVTS will consider a 2023-2026 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment to add the Riverside Drive Multimodal Revitalization Corridor project. The project is funded by the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant that was awarded to the project in the amount of \$21,158,854.

The project is a 3-mile project that will create a robust, multimodal commuting, emergency management, and equitable access corridor stretching from the City of Allentown through Whitehall Township. This project converts an abandoned railroad bed along the west side of the Lehigh River in Whitehall Township and the City of Allentown, Lehigh County, from just Lehigh Avenue to Furnace Street to a complete two-lane street with an adjacent multi-use path. The multi-use path will continue north to connect to the existing Delaware and Lehigh (D&L) Trail just north of Race Street. The expected completion will be in 2029. This is a project that will serve an equity community with modern multi-modal infrastructure for better access to and from the community.

Ms. Bradley stated that The Riverside Drive project is an alternative transportation corridor that will help reduce vehicular emissions, greenhouse gas emissions, and energy consumption as a strategic congestion mitigation investment by connecting existing transit routes, sidewalks, trails, bikeways, and roadways and enhancing emergency response to areas of Route 22 our highest traveled highway segment in the Lehigh Valley. Requirements to amend the Transportation Improvement Program to add a project include, travel demand modeling, which was completed and a draft air quality conformity report for the Lehigh Valley MPO, was forwarded to the required Interagency Coordination Group. This includes: the Federal Highway Administration, Federal Transit Administration, US Environmental Protection Agency and PENNDOT. They review for conformance with various state and federal statutes. It is of note that the conformity emission analysis now utilizes EPA's latest MOVES 3.1 emission model, as it is required as of January 2023.

Ms. Bradley also noted that as part of the Interagency Coordination, the LVPC confirmed that the LANTA Engine Vehicle Overhaul (VOH) Program (Lanta) – (MPMS# 97977), voted on by the LVTS to be funded in February, is exempted, as well as the Hugh Moore Park Bridge, so that this project can also move into the funding cycle in the near future.

Ms. Milagio shared that the 30-day public review and comment period officially opens today. Draft Amendments for the Riverside Drive project are available at the public libraries of Allentown, Bethlehem, and Easton, as well as the offices of PennDOT District 5, LANTA, and the LVPC. It is also available digitally at the LVPC website. Comments can be made on the LVPC website, in an email to [planning@lvpc.org](mailto:planning@lvpc.org), over the phone at 610-264-4544, or at one of the two public meetings held during the 30-day period. The first public meeting will be held at the training room at Bucky Boyle Park in Allentown on May 11 at 7 PM, and the second public meeting will be held during the LVTS Technical Committee on May 17th at 9 AM.

Ms. Milagio noted that the public review and comment period will officially close on May 19, after which comments will be prepared and responded to in preparation for the June 21 Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting. It is of note that this public comment period is required prior to a vote for addition to the Transportation Improvement Program.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions from members. Mr. McClure asked if there is an opportunity to collect administration fees for the administration of the grant. Ms. Bradley stated that there is not because the grant has been turned over to the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), and any work for the grant now is covered the Unified Planning Work Program with PennDOT. This is the same process for all other projects, as is the required role of the Metropolitan Planning Organization. Mr. McClure asked if there was an opportunity to recoup administration fees for the administration of the grant, such that PennDOT could do that. Ms. Bradley noted that PennDOT works that into their project management component, and that Ms. Frey, project manager from PennDOT, was on the meeting. Mr. McClure asked what the administrative fee for the grant was. Ms. Frey noted that no administrative fee was taken out of the grant, and that the entire grant was going into preliminary engineering, right of way acquisition, utility and construction funding. Mr. McClure thanked Ms. Frey for her answer, and asked if there were any questions or comments from the public. Ms. Bradley stated that, via the meeting chat, Ms. Rackus suggested that documents be delivered to the Whitehall Township

Public Library. Ms. Bradley thanked Ms. Rackus for her suggestion and noted that the LVPC staff would arrange for a binder to be delivered. Mr. McClure asked if there were any additional questions or comments, and there were none.

***INFORMATION ITEM: PennDOT Transportation Improvement Program Modifications***

Ms. Ruth noted that, from February 4 to April 7, there were five statewide actions, one administrative action, and nine PennDOT District 5 administrative actions. Mr. McClure asked Ms. Ruth to define an administrative action. Ms. Ruth explained that an administrative action is a transfer of funds on the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) within the fiscal constraint, according to the assigned funding buckets that are assigned during TIP development. Ms. Ruth noted that funding is moved as needed, and that there are line items with excess funding that can be used to add to actual needs on projects. Some projects require cash flowing, and if the money in those line items isn't going to be used in the federal fiscal year that it's assigned to, the money will be pushed out, but will be used somewhere on a project where it is needed. Mr. McClure asked Ms. Ruth to confirm that actions under a certain dollar amount do not require a vote from LVTS. Ms. Ruth confirmed that anything under a \$2 million increase does not require a vote by LVTS. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions on the report from committee members or the public, and there were none.

***INFORMATION ITEM: Long-Range Transportation Plan Update***

Ms. Milagio stated that on March 27, the staff completed the 24 transportation needs assessment sub-regional meetings. 300 new project requests have been received, in addition to the projects that are already on the Transportation Improvement Program and current Long-Range Transportation Plan. Staff also closed the Transportation Needs Assessment Survey on April 17<sup>th</sup>, and received 1,000 responses.

Mr. Osei shared that the staff are analyzing and summarizing the transportation survey responses for presentation to the Technical Committee next month, checking project requests for eligibility for federal funding and soon will begin working with PENNDOT to check project costs against the current market so there are accurate estimates as the LVTS moves towards project selection. To meet federal requirements to incorporate new Justice 40/Equity requirements, check for safety, and congestion among other data factors, the staff are in the process of creating a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) data analysis tool that includes over 80 data sets.

Mr. Neratko reviewed the GIS analysis tool. He first showed the map with the 2023 equity analysis tool, which is essentially completed at this time. This tool shows the "Access to Opportunity" scores for 2020 and 2023, Justice40 census tracts, and the layers that were used to create the Access to Opportunity map. There are many data sets used in the tool, including population rate by natural disasters, percentage of energy cost burdened population, share of adults with asthma, and share of homes with no indoor plumbing. He noted that the tool will be publicly available on the LVPC's website.

Mr. Neratko also shared that he is working on another GIS analysis tool that will support transportation spending analysis for the LVTS. These data sets include safety, congestion management process, bridge and pavement, multimodal and transit, freight, and climate data. He noted that this map will also be publicly available. Ms. Bradley highlighted that the data sets used for the equity analysis has expanded from 16, used in the voluntary 2018 analysis, to over 80 data sets when combined with the transportation data sets used in the second GIS tool. Ms. Bradley noted that this analysis will be utilized in future projects, in addition to the transportation selection process. She stated that the 300+ projects, both current LRTP projects and those proposed, will also be loaded into the tools. She reminded participants that the revised and expanded Access to Opportunity mapping and analysis tool will be publicly available as a resource for the region once completed. This will also be used as a monitoring tool for Environmental Justice and track improvements on changes in historically disadvantaged communities.

Ms. Bradley noted that the staff will also be starting the input and analysis, begin the policy review, and are currently awaiting final financial guidance from PennDOT so we can finalize the budget and

associated processes. In June, the LVTS will begin project selection meetings, which are scheduled for June 16, 23, and 30. All meetings will be held at the LVPC office from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM. The hope is that the LVTS will complete the selection process on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and that the June 30<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held if necessary. These meetings will be advertised and posted to the LVPC website. She also noted that the draft plan will need to be finished by July, the travel demand modeling and additional regulatory compliance will begin in August, as well as the 30-day public comment period. Adoption of the updated LRTP is anticipated for the September 20, 2023 LVTS meeting.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from members. Mr. McClure asked what data sources were used to create the GIS tools. Mr. Osei noted that the transportation data sources are y from PennDOT, such as the network screening list, which analyzes crash locations and cost benefit, as well as, the Census Bureau, LVPC and other sources . The staff also utilized PennShare data and Federal databases. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from the public, 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 January, and that both items would continue to be standing agenda items for the LVTS as both projects continue. Ms. Bradley shared that PENNDOT has WSP under contract for the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Study. WSP will be ready with a status report for the LVTS Technical Committee on Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at 9 AM. She anticipates that this meeting will occupy a significant amount of time on the agenda and that the meeting to run long as a result. Other reports on agenda will be limited to allow the conversation on this project to be robust. Mr. Cotter asked if any members of the committees or public had any comments or questions. Mr. McClure noted that he is often asked why the passenger rail analysis isn't moving more quickly, and asked what he can share with constituents to explain why the project takes this much time. Ms. Bradley noted that PennDOT is the agency that has initiated the project, and that the project is following the federally required standards for consideration of passenger rail analysis. Ms. Bradley understands that they are moving as quickly as possible, and the analysis is anticipated to be completed by the end of 2024. Ms. Bradley noted that, per the last meeting with the project team, project completion may occur more quickly than initially anticipated. She said that this is certainly a question that can be asked of the project team at the May 17 meeting. Mr. Cotter asked if there were any other questions from members or the public, and there were none.

***INFORMATION ITEM: Eastern PA Freight Alliance Freight Infrastructure Plan***

Mr. Osei provided an update on the Eastern PA Freight Alliance's Freight Infrastructure Plan, which is in the early stages. The steering committee met on April 6<sup>th</sup> to discuss the public participation process, and the staff are following up with the consultant and will bring related updates in the near future.

***INFORMATION ITEM: Monthly Traffic Report***

Mr. Hite noted that monthly traffic reports have been made for three years, since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. A lot has been learned from continuous traffic counters, which record data 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Data is pulled every Tuesday of the month and reports made at the LVTS meetings are for the last Tuesday's numbers.

Mr. Hite stated that Route 22 between Airport Road and the Lehigh River Bridge recorded 104,156 total vehicles. Route 33 near Route registered 80,229 vehicles, while Interstate 78 near Route 309 67,109 vehicles, a decrease from 74,141 from December of 2022. Route 309 near Coopersburg in Lehigh County registered 39,815 vehicles to close out the month. Mr. Hite also noted that two traffic counters collected classification data and showed that there were 19,941 trucks on Interstate 78 near 309 and 13,543 trucks on Route 22 in March.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments about the traffic report from the members. Mr. McClure noted that it seems that there is an uptick in accidents, specifically on Route 22, and he

asked if this was something that the LVTS tracks. Mr. Hite said that this data is being collected as part of the LRTP update, and that will be incorporated into the Safety Plan after the completion of the LRTP. Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from the public, and there were none.

## **New Business**

### ***ACTION ITEM: Performance Measures PM-2 and PM-3 Target Setting***

Mr. Osei presented the proposed pavement and bridge condition (PM-2) and system performance and reliability (PM-3) performance measures for 2023. He stated that, in accordance with the federal rule (23 CFR 490) enacted to implement national performance management requirements, PennDOT and LVTS must establish measures that assess the conditions of pavement and bridges on the National Highway System (NHS), as well as measures that assess NHS travel reliability and the effectiveness of the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) program. These measures are referred to as PM2 and PM3, respectively. These performance measures aim to collect data and target transportation investments to improve the system with the result of a project selection process rooted in data and analysis to enhance transportation system performance. In 2022, the LVTS set targets for PM-3 for Annual Hours of peak-Hour Excessive Delay (PHED) and for Percent Non-Single Occupant Vehicle (SOV) Travel. In February 2021, LVTS adopted PM-2 and adopted the adjusted PM 3 target for interstate reliability, truck travel time index, CMAQ PM 10 emissions, and CMAQ CO emission. PennDOT, in partnership with LVTS, updated the PM 2 and 3 targets for this year.

Mr. Osei noted that PM-2 assesses the condition of pavement and bridges on the National Highway System and measures the following six criteria: percentage of pavements on the interstate system in good condition; percentage of pavements on the interstate system in poor condition; percentage of pavements on the non-interstate NHS in good condition; percentage of pavements on the non-interstate NHS in poor condition; percentage of NHS bridges classified as in good condition; percentage of NHS bridges classified as in poor condition. He also noted that statewide PM-2 targets were met during the four-year time period 2018-2021.

Mr. Osei stated that proposed targets for PM-2 were set by PennDOT in partnership with LVTS. For all the criteria in PM-2, planned and programmed projects were considered while establishing targets. Expected improvement from these projects was projected, as was anticipated deterioration on "untouched" projects. As funding is available, and projects are programmed in the short term in order to result in an investment that maintains a state of good repair. Mr. Osei reviewed the PM-2 targets for the region, which can be found on page 32 of the meeting packet. He noted that federal regulations require that MPOs establish targets for the remaining PM-2 measures within 180 days of the PennDOT established targets on June 14, 2023, and the staff are looking for a vote of approval of the proposed PM-2 measures. The Technical Committee voted to recommend the PM-2 measures during their March 15 meeting.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from the committee or the public, and there were none. Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the Performance Measure 2 Targets for 2023. Mr. Molchany made the motion to approve the Performance Measure-2 Targets for 2023, and Ms. Bradley seconded the motion. 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.

Mr. Osei continued his presentation and reviewed the PM-3 targets for 2023. He noted that there are six performance measures set for PM-3: Percent of person-miles traveled on the interstate system that are reliable; percent of person-miles traveled on the non-interstate NHS that are reliable; truck travel time reliability index; annual hours of peak-hour excessive delay (PHED); total emission reduction. Both the Lehigh Valley and the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania achieved their targets for interstate roads during the four-year period 2018-2021. The Lehigh Valley met its goals for non-interstate roads in 2020 and 2021, while the Commonwealth met its non-interstate road goals for the entire four-year period 2018-2021. Pennsylvania also met its PM-3 targets related to reliability and emissions reductions during that four-year period.

Mr. Osei reviewed the PM-3 targets for the region, which can be found on pages 33-36 of the meeting packet. He noted that the Coordinating Committee also needs vote to approve the PM-3 measures to the in order to meet the deadline for decision in June. The Technical Committee voted to recommend the PM-3 measures during their March 15 meeting.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions or comments from members or the public. Ms. Milagio read Mr. Harney's question, "How is a reliable trip defined?" Ms. Bradley said that it's related to congestion and mobility. There are specific measures that PennDOT puts together that are based on the vehicle movements on roadways. Mr. McClure asked if there were any more questions, and there were none. Mr. McClure asked for a motion to approve the Performance Measure-3 Targets for 2023. Mr. Molchany made the motion to approve the Performance Measure 3 Targets for 2023, and Mr. Kufro seconded the motion. 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.

**INFORMATION ITEM: US Department of Environmental Protection Climate Pollution Reduction Grants Program**

Ms. Bradley reported that the US Department of Environmental Protection (EPA) released a formula-based grant program for climate action planning of \$1 million each for the top 67 largest metropolitan areas by population. The Lehigh Valley is the 69th largest. On Thursday, April 6th the LVPC learned that we were now included in the program and, on April 14th, a formal announcement was made in Harrisburg. A letter of intent for the formula grants is required to be received by the EPA by April 28th, 2023, and no match is required. Ms. Bradley met with EPA and DEP on April 17th to discuss required coordination and next steps. Specifically, the EPA has organized the program as a "down payment" on climate action per Region 3 Administrator, Adam Ortiz. This means that the LVPC is charged with building capacity per program requirements.

Ms. Bradley noted that the funds are required to be used over the course of a four-year period to:

- Create a Priority Climate Action Plan, in coordination with PA DEP due in early 2024 and focus on industrial decarbonization: This specific plan will allow for application for over \$4 billion in additional funding for implementation. PA DEP will be focusing on the greening of industrial buildings and industrial processes and the Metropolitan Planning Organizations on industrial decarbonization around freight transportation and infrastructure which will include water and air quality planning and support hazard mitigation and emergency services goals.
- Develop a Comprehensive Climate Action Plan within two years of an award.
- Monitor and develop status reporting by the close of the award period in 2027.

The LVPC intends to coordinate this with new Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act requirements of the MPO for carbon reduction and protection and will be following-up PENNDOT and USDOT, the Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission, Southwest Pennsylvania Commission, PA DEP and EPA further and will be bringing additional back as necessary. It is of note that DVRPC and SPC are the two other regions in the Commonwealth that also are recipients, as is the DEP.

Ms. Bradley noted that the LVPC is incredibly excited to be able to advance the goals, policies and actions outlined in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* which includes a strong and continued commitment to the environment and management of the realities of a robust industrial economy. The LVPC is also delighted to have the Commonwealth as a partner in industrial decarbonization.

Mr. McClure asked if there were any questions from the members and the public. Mr. Molchany noted that both Lehigh and Northampton counties are taking on projects to monitor, measure, and report on air pollution. He believes that this data will be valuable in creating a foundation of information for these projects, and he requested that the teams working on these projects work closely with the LVPC. Ms. Bradley stated that working with the counties and others is important and that LVPC and LVTS represent these partnerships. Mr. McClure concurred that the counties would be happy to support this project with data sharing. Ms. Bradley noted that the locations for the industrial monitors are in or around

industrial facilities, and air quality needs to be looked at more broadly, assuming that this is an allowable activity per the grant. She also noted that, because MPOs are traditionally the organizations that handle air quality monitoring, the LVTS will need to bring this program in house and make sure that the monitors are established in permanent locations. There is also a requirement for the counties to tie this project in with their hazard mitigation plans, and that the LVPC will need to be at all those project meetings to make sure that this is coordinated with infrastructure safety, security, and mobility. This was directly communicated to the LVPC from the Pennsylvania Emergency Management Agency (PEMA).

**PRESENTATION ITEM: LVPC/LVTS Annual Organizational Report**

Ms. Bradley noted that the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code requires county planning agencies to release an annual report of activities and share information with communities in multi-municipal comprehensive plans by March 1st, which was accomplished by the end of February. She stated that her presentation for LVTS would be a transportation element report from the organizational report that details a fast-paced year in which we delivered an unprecedented amount of analysis, from our 30-year population and employment forecast to the Lehigh Valley's first-ever Regional Greenhouse Gas Assessment to a half-billion-dollar Lehigh Valley Transportation Study Transportation Improvement Plan. In addition, the LVPC continued its guidance of development with the most land development and stormwater management plans filed in 15 years.

Ms. Bradley reviewed elements of the region's first-ever Greenhouse Gas Inventory, which was completed in 2022. This region emits more than 9.8 million metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent – that's 14.6 tons for every person who live in the Lehigh Valley. The one sector that is already projected to see its emissions decrease by 33% by 2050 is the Transportation Sector, due to federal Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) Standards. Transportation emissions are projected to decline from 2.62 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent to 1.76 million metric tons of CO2 equivalent. However, all of those reductions will be more than offset by population and business growth -- unless we take dramatic action to curtail them. The full Greenhouse Gas Inventory is now available at [lvpc.org/climate-action](http://lvpc.org/climate-action).

Mr. Osei reviewed the updated Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) completed in 2022. The \$485.6 million plan includes 108 road, bridge, transit, trail and community projects in every corner of the region. It also includes \$80 million from the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs act, and we expect that we will be adding to it this year as we apply for competitive grants offered by the infrastructure law. In addition to the new funding plan adopted by the LVTS and approved by PENNDOT and USDOT, the region accomplished a lengthy list of projects in 2022 under the previous TIP. Among the more than \$103 million worth of projects you will find some of the region's most recognizable roads, bridges and pedestrian thruways. The list of 20 completed projects includes the Tilghman Street Bridge, Hellertown Main Street pedestrian improvements, and resurfacing projects on Route 512 through the Slate Belt and Route 22 from 15th Street to Interstate 78. Along the way, PennDOT was able to save \$8 million on projects that came in under budget and those dollars were allocated to other projects at the direction of the LVTS.

Mr. Osei noted that the COVID-19 confirmed the LVPC's role as a vital resource for the community. In 2022, the LVPC expanded their Lehigh Valley Government Academy. That included reinstating in-person zoning, zoning administration, subdivision and land development, and community planning classes to train the next generation of community leaders on how Pennsylvania government and development works. 359 local officials were trained and those attending three of the four Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute courses achieved LVPC's Certified Citizen Planner. In partnership with PENNDOT, the LVPC continued 12 months of online classes on a variety of public works and transportation planning topics. Included in the program was a record number 44 Tech Assistants where a PennDOT Engineer and an LVPC staff member met with municipal planners out in the community to give them advice on how to make their transportation network safer and more efficient. The LVPC also conducted several Transformative Talks on topics like utility-scale solar, multi-municipal planning and coordinated zoning. Lastly, the LVPC hosted its bi-annual Lehigh Valley General Assemblies. These are meetings of all 62 of the Lehigh Valley's local governments, both counties, and state and federal representatives and senators to discuss the dynamics of governance and regional needs, as well as, to provide discussion and training on trends and emerging issues. The General Assemblies help to develop the LVPC/LVTS work program and budget.



Ms. Bradley stated that the *BuildLV* development report showed that more than 1,200 reviews were conducted in 2022. This included 547 subdivision and land development reviews – the most since 2008 -- and 223 stormwater management reviews, which is the most since 2006. The Transportation team reviewed 50 Transportation impact Studies and 13 street vacations, and those reviews were crafted to be more detailed and more complex so they could be a greater resource for municipal partners trying to manage development in their communities as well as support the public dialogue on the growing complexity and intensity of growth regionwide.

Ms. Bradley noted that one of the region's greatest challenges in 2022 was its evolving housing market – something we follow closely so that we can manage growth. The LVPC's analysis showed that a monumental housing shortage, combined with a Pandemic-accelerated population growth drove the median sales price of a home to \$280,000 – a 60% increase since 2015. Combined with rising interest rates, that put more than 78,000 Lehigh Valley households in a cost-burdened situation in which their housing costs are likely straining their financial stability. That's nearly 3 in 10 households, or 195,000 people regionwide. It's a condition that remains an issue in 2023, which is why the LVPC will partner with Lehigh County and the Urban Land Institute to develop the first-ever regional housing supply and attainability strategy designed to increase housing diversity and supply where it's needed most over the next year. Developers began to address the supply shortage in 2022; the LVPC reviewed plans for more than 6,400 new homes – the most since 2007. The LVPC received the most apartments proposals this century, and a greater diversity of homes, including more than 1,100 townhomes and 264 twins. And while single-family homes no longer dominate the Lehigh Valley building market, more than 1,000 were proposed last year. Proposed housing units will not be ready for sale for at least two years, and the analysis shows that there is still a 9,000-unit housing shortage, meaning it could take years to close the housing gap.

Ms. Bradley stated that the LVPC reviewed more than 22 million square feet of non-residential development – the most ever in a single year. 18 million square feet was for industrial development, roughly 17.5 million of which was for warehouse, e-commerce or logistics space. While there was a significant amount of warehouse space reviewed in both counties, the majority was in Northampton County, where the most recent CBRE report showed vacancy rates at just 5%. Other non-residential numbers included 1.7 million square feet of commercial. That's the most this century, primarily because half of it is for self-storage facilities, which is in line with a nationwide trend. Non-residential development also included 1.5 million square feet of public/quasi-public space, mostly for healthcare and education facilities, and 459,000 square feet of retail space, which was the most since 2015. Office space reviewed was 333,698 square feet, which is only slightly less than in recent years.

Ms. Bradley noted that warehouse and industrial development has been a consistent trend for the last six years. Municipalities have approved 4,432,857 million square feet of manufacturing, mineral extraction and general industrial and 22,509,040 square feet of warehouse, e-commerce and logistics in the past six years. Compare municipal approvals to the proposals the LVPC has reviewed through 2022 and a potential 21.5 million square feet of warehouse, e-commerce and logistics and a little over 1 million square feet of general industrial, mineral extraction and manufacturing space could be built in the coming years. If local governments approve all the plans proposed, new inventory will increase from 22.5 million square feet to over 44 million square feet of warehouse and nearly 5.5 million square feet manufacturing. This reinforces the Lehigh Valley's need to balance and manage growth through *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*, local official training and technical assistance programs.

Ms. Bradley highlighted non-residential development in various municipalities in both counties. Upper Macungie continued to see expansion of its long-existing industrial district. This industrial corridor has been growing into Lower Macungie to the South for around a decade and the trend continued over the last year. Upper Macungie has some of the best highway and freight rail access in the region, while Lower Macungie has moderate infrastructure access. The City of Allentown also continued to see growth, particularly in office and mixed-use development. Similarly, Upper and Lower Macungie's growth is pushing into Allentown's suburban and largely highway-style commercial neighbor, Hanover Township, Lehigh County, where a small industrial district is beginning to expand. Hanover has excellent access to Route 22 and the Airport, which are major drivers for industrial development. Industrial development continued to push North of the Lehigh Valley International Airport into East Allen and Moore Townships.

East Allen has moderate to poor infrastructure access for freight movement and Moore has poor to very poor freight supportive infrastructure. It is important to note that East Allen is part of the River Central Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan, now in draft form and expected to begin adoption in the first half of this year, and Moore is part of the newly adopted Nazareth Area Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan. Lower Nazareth Township has experienced significant non-residential growth, which is extending into Bethlehem Township. Lower Nazareth is also part of the Nazareth Area Multi-Municipal Comprehensive Plan and has nearly completed a comprehensive zoning update. Both Lower Nazareth and Bethlehem Townships have excellent to moderate commercial infrastructure access. Forks Township has seen intense development pressure, especially industrial. The challenge for Forks is the poor to very poor access to commercial infrastructure to support this growth. Pressure in Forks is not expected to slow, and it is likely that infrastructure and quality of life challenges to continue and increase. Staff will continue to monitor the locations of growth and tailor technical assistance and support to areas that are seeing increasing challenges to those that are most likely to experience growth pressure next.

Ms. Bradley reviewed key freight initiatives in 2022, the Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance and the Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Management Guide. Both initiatives were designed to support county, municipal, and regional partners better manage freight land uses and traffic passing through the region, and to mitigate its impacts. The Eastern Pennsylvania Freight Alliance is a multi-regional coalition created to write a new freight infrastructure plan for the Lehigh Valley, Northeast Pennsylvania, Lackawanna-Luzerne, Berks County and Lebanon County areas. Encompassing 10 counties and 400 municipalities, the Alliance issued a request for proposals and selected a consultant to begin the planning process in 2022. The Freight Infrastructure Plan will analyze the transportation network and land use among other factors to develop a strategy to better manage freight mobility in Eastern Pennsylvania. The plan is anticipated to be complete in late 2023-early 2024. The Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Management Guide was created by the LVPC, at the request of Northampton County, to assist municipal governments in planning for and regulating the location and impacts of freight-based industrial development. The Guide includes an online Geographic Information System mapping tool to assess the zoning and land uses of all 38 Northampton County local governments. Examples of other planning tools, such as official maps, ordinances and transportation impact fees, that can also manage the impacts of this form of development are included. The Guide, GIS mapping tool, and a training video are located on the Northampton County website (<https://www.northamptoncounty.org/CMTYECDV/Pages/Freight-Based-Land-Use-Management-Guide.aspx>). The LVPC will be preparing a freight-based land use guide for Lehigh County communities in 2023.

Ms. Bradley concluded the presentation by expressing her gratitude to the LVTS for its continued support that helped make all this work possible in 2022, as well as the upcoming work for 2023. She highlighted the update to the LRTP, safety planning efforts, climate action work, congestion management process and functional classification of roadways updates as 2023 projects which will benefit greatly from the support of the LVTS.

Mr. Molchany noted that there is a 3% per year growth in funding anticipated, based on the need for financial constraints. The last several years have greatly exceeded that 3% because of inflation, and this escalation creates many of the administrative changes we see to the TIP. He asked if there was any guidance from FHWA or PennDOT on what the percent of escalation will be as we continue to update the TIP and LRTP. Ms. Bradley noted that the LVTS is currently waiting for financial guidance from PennDOT, and there are additional funding sources around climate work anticipated for the update to the LRTP. She said that it is unlikely that the funding levels will keep up with inflation because the formulas are based on road miles, the census, and the newly refined Metropolitan Statistical Area. This will continue to be a significant challenge for the LVTS. Ms. Bradley also noted that costs associated with projects, including labor and parts, are continuing to escalate, and the demand will also continue to grow. This highlights the need for the staff time and resources that went in to the development of the GIS tool mentioned earlier, so that the LVTS can use the required data-driven measures to advocate for additional funding. Mr. Molchany noted that it is important for partners at FHWA and PennDOT Central Office to understand that the LVTS is crafting the TIP, medium-, and long-range plans based on the financial constraints, while knowing that there are \$4 billion of projects that remain as unmet needs. As cost continues rise but the funding does not keep up, the reality is that there will be fewer projects that will be

able to be completed, meaning that more projects will default to the unmet needs. Mr. Molchany expressed that this is a significant concern for the update to the LRTP.

Mr. McClure noted that local communities have provided positive feedback on the Northampton County Freight-Based Land Use Management Guide and Tool, and that it is the best money the county has spent in a very long time. Ms. Bradley thanked Mr. McClure for the feedback, and expressed thanks for the partnership between the LVPC and Northampton County. She also noted that the LVPC is monitoring changes made by local municipalities, in order to provide information to the county that can be shared out on how the guide and tool have been utilized at the May 4 County Council meeting.

***INFORMATION ITEM: Transportation Safety Plan Update and Safe Streets for All Activities***

Mr. Martinez stated that the LVTS would be conducting a walk audit program in partnership with the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley and the AARP of Pennsylvania. This partnership is also part of the data gathering and community engagement strategy for the Transportation Safety Plan update. The goal of the walk audit program is to improve pedestrian safety and accessibility through mobilizing volunteers to document pedestrian conditions in their own communities.

Mr. Martinez shared that a walk audit is an established program pioneered by the AARP that has been conducted in conjunction with community organizations across the country. A walk audit consists of teams of volunteers who observe and document pedestrian conditions at certain locations. These conditions are specified in worksheets provided by the AARP, which include the existence or lack thereof of crosswalks and ADA accessibility, condition of sidewalks and transit stops, and street lighting, to name a few examples. Walk audits gather valuable input from community members and galvanize support for improved pedestrian access by raising awareness in the community. The program will also provide an opportunity for the public to play an important role in gathering information that will be used in the update of the Transportation Safety Plan, which will help acquire funding for projects that install and upgrade pedestrian infrastructure across the Lehigh Valley, including the locations of these walk audits.

Mr. Martinez noted that the LVPC identified 50 priority locations across the Lehigh Valley for teams to audit. The staff arrived at this list of locations by identifying locations where pedestrian fatalities have occurred from 2017 through 2021. However, locations that were determined to be too dangerous to audit were not included, such as divided highways and other roads with high vehicle speeds and minimal pedestrian right of way. After identifying 22 auditable locations with prior fatalities, staff then identified locations with 3 or more important criteria nearby. These criteria are prior suspected serious injuries to pedestrians, senior centers, hospitals, schools, trail crossings, LANTA bus stops, and parks. With this, we were able to compile a list of 50 initial locations. However, there are far more than 50 locations across the Valley that deserve to be audited, and we want volunteers to audit places that are important to them, so groups are welcome to perform audits at other locations that they deem important, so long as they notify the LVPC beforehand.

Mr. Neratko reviewed the mapping tool used to visualize locations and parameters for choosing the locations. He also highlighted layers of the mapping tool that can be used to highlight locations for different locations including hospitals, schools, trail street crossings, and LANTA bus routes. Fatalities and suspected serious injuries are also layered into the tool, as they were instrumental in choosing the locations for the Walk Audits. He noted that the LVPC will be tracking where audits occur in the map, and what the results of those audits are. The map will be publicly available.

Ms. Milagio noted that the first WorkshopLV: Multimodal since the COVID-19 pandemic would be held on Friday, April 21 at noon to support the Transportation Safety Plan Update. With aggressive driving on the rise and pedestrian safety at risk, the LVPC and LVTS will host a special WorkshopLV: Multimodal virtual session to give municipal partners and communities leaders the latest on what's being done right now to improve pedestrian safety and where to find grants to help make all of our communities safer and more walkable. WorkshopLV: Multimodal – Pedestrian Safety will cover the funding focus of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, LRPT update, implantation of Walk/RollLV: Active Transportation Plan, the Walk Audit

program that was mentioned earlier that is about to start regionwide and several grants opportunities that can benefit every community. More information on the workshop is at [www.lvpc.org/active-transportation](http://www.lvpc.org/active-transportation).

**INFORMATION ITEM: Public Engagement and Participation**

Mr. Assad shared that the most recent Plan Lehigh Valley radio show aired on February 6 on WDIY FM 88.1, and it focused on efforts being done to make the region more walkable and bikeable. LVPC Community Fellow, Mr. Martinez, and Senior Director of Health Aging at the United Way of the Greater Lehigh Valley, Carmen Bell, joined Ms. Bradley and Mr. Assad to talk about what appears to be a nationwide increase in aggressive driving since the Pandemic, and the efforts to make our communities more accessible to everyone, including seniors. Ms. Bell and Mr. Martinez also laid out their plans for the walk audits previously mentioned. That show is now streaming at [wdiy.org](http://wdiy.org) and at [lvpc.org](http://lvpc.org).

Mr. Assad noted that the most recent Business Cycle Column published Sunday, March 26, in the Sunday Morning Call. In the column with the headline “Knowledge is Power: this Region Craves It”, Ms. Bradley discussed the in-person Lehigh Valley Government Academy Transportation and Planning Classes, how some of them are the most well-attended in Pennsylvania, as well as a Tech Assist program free to any municipality that asks, that PennDOT holds out as a statewide model.

Mr. Assad stated that Pennsylvania WalkWorks just opened a new grant window for municipalities that want to create more walkable communities. These are grants aimed strictly at municipalities and MPOs and the grants run up to \$35,000 to help communities devise active transportation plans with an emphasis on walking, biking, wheelchair accessibility and public transit. This is a Pennsylvania Department of Health program, so it’s about transportation and health. The deadline to seek questions from the department is May 12 and the deadline to apply is May 26. We know these are gettable grants because we received one a few years ago to help with our Walk/Roll Plan and Bethlehem Township won one last year to do its current Active Transportation Plan. More info and applications are at the PA WalkWorks page.

Mr. Assad reminded meeting participants that time is running out to apply for this round of PennDOT’s electric vehicle infrastructure grants. PennDOT has \$56 million available for the installation of charging sites in this first round of funding that is open to private and public entities, so long as they provide a 20% match and are within one mile of an approved alternative fuels corridor, though some exceptions will be allowed. I-78 and The Pennsylvania Turnpike are our alternative fuels corridors. There is a lot more information available through the PennDOT webpage. The easiest way to get there is to Google PennDOT and NEVI. Do it soon because the deadline is May 5.

Mr. Hite announced that the Charging and Fueling Infrastructure Discretionary Grant Program (CFI Program) is a new competitive grant program created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to strategically deploy publicly accessible electric vehicle charging and alternative fueling infrastructure in the places people live and work, urban and rural areas alike, in addition to along designated Alternative Fuel Corridors (AFCs). CFI Program investments will make modern and sustainable infrastructure accessible to all drivers of electric, hydrogen, propane, and natural gas vehicles. This program provides two funding categories of grants: (1) Community Charging and Fueling Grants (Community Program); and (2) Alternative Fuel Corridor Grants (Corridor Program). The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law provides \$2.5 billion over five years for this program. This first round of funding makes \$700 million from Fiscal Years 2022 and 2023 funding available to strategically deploy electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure and other fueling infrastructure projects in urban and rural communities in publicly accessible locations, including downtown areas and local neighborhoods, particularly in underserved and disadvantaged communities. Applications are due May 30, 2023 and there is more information, including a recorded webinar, on the [grants.gov](https://grants.gov) page for the CFI.

Mr. Hite noted that The Pennsylvania Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED) has a Multimodal Transportation Fund that is available for projects that specifically for multimodal

development, rehabilitation and enhancement of transportation assets to existing communities, streetscape, lighting, sidewalk enhancement, pedestrian safety, connectivity of transportation enhance transportation options for all modes of travel, including biking and walking. This funding is available to organizations and municipalities across Pennsylvania, and applications are open until July 31st. More information is available on the DCED website shown on the screen or by searching the internet for PA DCED Multimodal Transportation Fund.

Mr. Hite stated that the Transportation Alternatives Set-Aside (TASA) specifically focuses on non-motorized transportation options such as walking rolling and biking as well as education of our children. Applications will be available on the TASA website May 10, there will be a webinar on May 24th and the actual application cycle will begin May 29<sup>th</sup>. This is a great opportunity for organizations and municipalities to fund projects that promote safe and accessible non-motorized transportation and education for all. More information will be available and updated shortly at the PennDOT TASA website which can easily be found by searching PennDOT TASA.

Mr. Hite shared that PennDOT will be accepting applications for the 2023 Automated Red Light Enforcement (ARLE) Funding Program from June 1st through June 30th, 2023. The 2023 program will continue to prioritize safety enhancements considering both PennDOT's Safety Network Screening methods for the project location and Crash Modification Factors associated with proposed improvements. A pre-application scoping form is required prior to submitting an application. Scoping forms should be submitted via email to [ARLE@pa.gov](mailto:ARLE@pa.gov). The scoping form should be submitted no later than April 30, 2023 to allow time for PennDOT to review and provide feedback prior to the application period in June. The completed and reviewed scoping form must be uploaded as an attachment to the formal application submission.

Mr. Hite noted that the Safe Streets and Roads for All Program, through the U.S. Department of Transportation, provides discretionary grants to support planning, infrastructure, behavioral, and operational initiatives to prevent death and serious injury on roads and streets involving all roadway users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, public transportation, personal conveyance, micro-mobility users, motorists, and commercial vehicle operators. The program provides funding to develop the tools to help strengthen a community's approach to roadway safety and save lives and is designed to meet the needs of diverse local, Tribal, and regional communities that differ dramatically in size, location, and experience administering Federal funding. The application process for this program is open until 5:00 pm July 10th.

Mr. Hite encouraged meeting participants to take the State Transportation Commission (STC) and the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation 2023 Public Comment Period for the update of the 12-Year Program. The Public Comment Period is open through Sunday, April 30, 2023. The STC is available online at <https://survey.TalkPaTransportation.com>.

Mr. Hite stated that, on May 16, PennDOT Connects is providing an opportunity to interact with PennDOT, Planning Partners, and other municipalities in the area. In addition to an overview of PennDOT Connects Municipal Resources, information will be provided on various additional programs and resources for municipalities such as: The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) Grant Opportunities and Available Support, PennDOT's 12-Year Program Survey: Status and Demonstration, The National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (NEVI) Program, Resources from the Department of Community and Economic Development (DCED), Resources from the Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR). Participants will be encouraged to contribute their own experiences and to share their best practices in planning, land use, and project delivery. Registration can be found by searching for PennDOT Connects Municipal Outreach meetings. This meeting will be hybrid with in-person and virtual accommodations available.

Mr. Hite noted that the PA Safety Day for the Lehigh Valley will be hosted at the Bill Harris Agricultural Hall, Allentown Fairgrounds, 302 N 17<sup>th</sup> St, Allentown, PA 18104 on May 18. This is a great opportunity for municipalities and especially public works crews to collaborate and learn best practices for utility

infrastructure repair and maintenance safety. More information and registration is available at [www.pa1call.org/safetyday](http://www.pa1call.org/safetyday).

Mr. Hite stated that, on April 12, there were 28 students in the LVPC's large conference room learning about Temporary Traffic Control (Work Zones). Students from Lehigh, Northampton, Montgomery, and Wayne counties attended, showing the reach of the LVPC/LVTS LTAP education. This class was so popular that another class is scheduled for May 11th. This class will enhance the student's awareness of the importance of safety for all workers and road users in work zones. It emphasizes worker safety, including what to wear, safe work zone practices and how to set up an appropriate work zone set up. Mr. Hite also wanted to recognize that this week is national work zone awareness week, and today is "Go Orange Day" which brings awareness to this week by wearing orange. National Work Zone Awareness week emphasizes where everyone needs to be aware that since spring is here that road work is really ramping up and that those cones and signs are not out there to inconvenience you, but to keep everyone safe by communicating that construction is going on with humans in the area working to make our transportation system better for today and tomorrow.

Mr. Hite noted that the second most requested class is Erosion and Sediment Control, which will be held on June 6<sup>th</sup>. This class is all about erosion and sediment control measures, including installation procedures and many examples of different situations. It also emphasizes the municipalities' role in monitoring post construction stormwater management, including developing municipal erosion and sediment plans as needed.

Mr. Hite also reviewed the schedule for virtual LTAP classes: May 4, Speed Data Collection, 11 AM – noon; June 6, Bridge and Culvert Inspections for municipalities, 8 AM – noon; June 13, Municipal Stormwater Facilities Program, 8 AM – noon; June 20, Stormwater Control Measures O+M, 8 AM – noon. Mr. Hite reminded participants at the meeting that municipalities interested in holding classes or in need of LTAP technical assistance should contact him.

Mr. Hite stated that the Lehigh Valley Government Academy also offers classes through the Pennsylvania Municipal Planning Education Institute. There are four courses spread throughout the year, each consisting of more than 10 hours of instruction on three consecutive weeknights from 5:30-9 pm. The Zoning class ends tomorrow. The Community Planning class will be held in May, and Subdivision and Land Development in September. Because Community Planning sold out so quickly last year, there will be a second class in October. All these courses do have relevance to transportation as land use and all these elements of planning are key components of transportation planning. Mr. Hite shared that, as a staff member who has completed all the courses, he found this information very valuable for all things in planning. It is time well spent learning about the intricacies of municipal planning.

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

### **Adjournment**

Mr. McClure stated that the next Technical Committee meeting will be held on May 17, 2023 at 9 AM, and that the next Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting will be held June 21, 2023 at 9 AM.

Ms. Bradley made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned.