



Lehigh Valley Transportation Study

RICHARD MOLCHANY
Chair, Coordinating Committee

BRENDAN COTTER
Chair, Technical Committee

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

Lehigh Valley Transportation Study Minutes from Wednesday, March 19, 2025 Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting

Prior to the call to order, Ms. Milagio stated the agenda and materials for the meeting were posted on the LVPC website. She provided directions on how to participate in the virtual meeting and protocol for the meeting to flow smoothly. The meeting was advertised in the Lehigh Valley Press on January 8, 2025. Mr. Rick Molchany chaired the Coordinating Committee portion of the meeting, and Mr. Brendan Cotter chaired the Technical Committee portion of the agenda.

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

Roll Call

Ms. Milagio took Roll Call.

Attendees:

Technical Committee

Brendan Cotter	LANTA
Ryan Meyer	LNAA
Becky Bradley, AICP	LVPC
David Petrik (Alt.)	City of Allentown
David Hopkins (Alt.)	City of Easton
Jen Ruth	PennDOT District 5
Nick Raio	PennDOT Central Office

LVTS Coordinating Committee

Rick Molchany (Alt.)	Lehigh County
David Hopkins (Alt.)	City of Easton
Becky Bradley, AICP	LVPC
David Petrik (Alt.)	City of Allentown
Michael Alkhal (Alt.)	City of Bethlehem
Michael Emili (Alt.)	Northampton County
Chris Kufro	PennDOT District 5-0
Jim Mosca	PennDOT Central Office
Owen O'Neill	LANTA
Thomas Stoudt	LNAA

Members Absent:

Technical Committee

Matthew Tuerk	City of Allentown
J. William Reynolds	City of Bethlehem
Darlene Heller (Alt.)	City of Bethlehem
Salvatore Panto	City of Easton

LVTS Coordinating Committee

Matthew Tuerk	City of Allentown
J. William Reynolds	City of Bethlehem
Lamont McClure	Northampton County

Staff Present: Becky Bradley, Evan Gardi, Brian Hite, Ben Dinkel, Hannah Milagio, Faria Urmey, Subham Kharel, Minsoo Park

Public Present:

Jerry Fry, Michael Rebert, Brian Hare, Christine Frey, WFMZ, Robert Almonte, Brett Webber, Jeff Rai, Scott Slingerland, Lawrence Peterson, Scott Harney, Sherri Penchisten, Craig Beavers, Scott Vottero, Kerri Cutwright, James McGee, Lee Rackus, Evan Jones, Rich Ames, Toni Mitman, Kurt Derr, Brian Miller, Kim Schaffer, Ron Beitler, Jennifer Swan

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Molchany recognized the Coalition for Appropriate Transportation (CAT) for awarding the LVTS with a "Considering Pedestrians" award for LVTS Bridge and Highway Projects.

CAT Executive Director Scott Slingerland added that the LVTS has an influence on Pedestrian and ADA mobility and thanked the committee again for considering bikes and pedestrian on LVTS projects.

Mr. Molchany asked if there were any comments or questions from the public about items not on the agenda, and there were none.

Minutes

Mr. Cotter stated that the last Technical Committee was held on February 19, 2025. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on:

- Minutes from January 15th, 2025, Joint Technical + Coordinating Committee Meeting
- Adjournment

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. Petrik made the motion, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Hopkins. There were no questions or comments from members of the public. Mr. Cotter asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion was approved.

Mr. Molchany stated the Coordinating Committee meeting was held on February 19, 2025. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on:

- Minutes from January 15th, 2025, Joint Technical + Coordinating Committee Meeting
- Adjournment

Mr. Molchany asked for a motion to approve the minutes. Mr. O'Neil made the motion, seconded by Mr. Mosca. Mr. Molchany asked if there were any questions or comments from the members and the public. Hearing none, Mr. Molchany asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion was approved.

There were no questions or comments from the committees or members of the public.

Old Business

ACTION ITEM: Transportation Planning Agreement between LVPC, PennDOT, and LANTA

Ms. Bradley presented the Transportation Planning Agreement between LVPC, PennDOT, and LANTA and said as part of the Federal Certification Review that occurred last year, LVPC, PennDOT and LANTA are required to enter into a transportation planning agreement outlining each agency's 'Roles and Responsibilities' in accordance with 23 Code of Federal Regulations 450.314.

Ms. Bradley added all partners met earlier this year and began working on the agreement. Partners have reached an agreement on language and checked that this meets the requirements of the federal law.

Ms. Bradley thanked Jim Mosca, Nick Raio and John Levitsky from PennDOT and Owen O'Neil and Brendan Cotter from LANTA for working diligently on their portions of the agreement and she thanked Gene Porochniak from the Federal Highway Administration for his guidance on the agreement.

Ms. Bradley presented on the LVTS's roles and responsibilities, Mr. Raio presented on the PennDOT Roles and Responsibilities, and Mr. O'Neil presented on LANTA's roles and responsibilities.

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the Transportation Planning Agreement. Mr. Hopkins made the motion, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Petrik. Mr. Cotter asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion was approved.

Mr. Mosca thanked the partners for their coordination and gave Kudos to the LVPC for the comprehensive review presentation on the Transportation Planning Agreement.

There were no additional questions or comments from the committees or members of the public.

2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Riverside Drive RAISE Grant TIP Amendment

Hannah Milagio presented the Riverside Drive RAISE Grant-TIP Amendment public comment period. The public comment period ran from January 29 to February 28, 2025. Physical copies of the amendment documentation were available at the LVPC, LANTA and PennDOT District 5 offices, as well as the public libraries in Allentown, Bethlehem, Easton, and Whitehall. Two public meetings were held, one at the February LVTS Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting on February 19, and the other during the February LVPC Transportation Committee meeting on February 27. Four comments were collected and responded to during the 30-day public review and comment period.

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the Amendment. Mr. Raio made the motion, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Meyer. Mr. Cotter asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion was approved.

There were no questions or comments from the committees or members of the public.

2025-2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Administrative Modifications (JR)

Ms. Ruth shared 4 TIP Administrative Actions from February 8th through March 7th, 2025.

1. Freemansburg Ave Safety Improvements
2. Hugh More Park Bridge Painting and Repairs
3. Walnut Street Bridge
4. Powder Valley Road over Indian Creek

There were no questions or comments from the committees or members of the public.

2025 Work Program Updates

Chair Molchany shared we have two updates to the 2025 Work Program since the last meeting.

Ms. Milagio shared information about the Project Selection Process for Transportation Alternative Set-Aside and Carbon Reduction Program.

The first Transportation Alternative Set-Aside workshop is May 24th and the second is May 21st. The LVTS will consider adopting the project selection process on June 18th.

The first Carbon Reduction Program workshop is June 25th and the second is on July 16th. The LVTS will consider adopting the project selection process on August 20th.

Mr. Gardi gave an update on the Enhanced Bus Service (EBS)/ Bus Rapid Transit (BRT). He said we have been working closely with our partners at PennDOT District 5 and LANTA to move the Enhanced Bus/Bus Rapid Transit System forward. Through our work on various plans such as FutureLV: The Regional Plan, Walk/Roll LV: Active Transportation Plan, and the current update of our Transportation

Safety plan, we have gathered valuable data from across the Lehigh Valley. With this data we have created a draft analysis map; This serves as the backbone of the individual system component and location selection. We had a project meeting on Monday to discuss the data analysis map and determine how the analysis will help with selecting projects and improvements to enhance the overall EBS/BRT system.

There were no questions or comments from the committees or members of the public.

Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Update

Chair Molchany said the LVTS is coordinating with the Federal Railroad Administration, and they have agreed to attend an LVTS meeting this summer. All Aboard Lehigh Valley is having an advocacy event tomorrow and Andy Batson, one of our WSP consultants, for the Lehigh Valley Passenger Rail Feasibility Analysis will be attending the event on behalf of the LVTS.

Chair Molchany said an update from the All-Aboard Event can happen at another meeting. Mr. Webber listed the speakers intending to present at the Event as: Becky Bradley, Northampton County Executive Lamont McClure, PA Representative Robert L. Freeman of PA House 136th District, Brett Webber, David Peter Alan *Railway Age*, Brian Licari of Econsult Solutions, Inc, Jim Matthews President and CEO of Rail Passenger Association, Joseph Barr Amtrak Director of Network Development – East, and Meredith Richards Chair of the Rail Passengers Association.

Ms. Bradely added Easton Mayor Salvador Panto is expected to present as well.

There were no additional questions or comments from the committees or members of the public.

New Business

Chair Molchany shared information that the 12-Year Program (TYP). He said it is like Pennsylvania's transportation planning tool. It includes statewide planning projects and assigns funding over a 12-year period. The first four years of the Statewide 12-year program is the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. The State Transportation Commission opened a survey for agencies and the public to provide comments on the 12-Year Program and Statewide Transportation Improvement Program. It's an important opportunity for us to be strategic in which projects we advocate for.

The average total cost of a project on the STIP, including all funding sources and excluding line items, is over \$7.2 million dollars, so there is a lot of competition around the state for transportation dollars. The public comment period is an opportunity to bring statewide money into our region, which can alleviate pressure on our LVTS Transportation Improvement Program. At the next LVTS meeting in April, we'll review a list of larger projects from our metropolitan transportation plan that may require outside funding to accomplish. Per the Transportation Planning Agreement, we will need forward a list of projects from the long-range transportation plan the State Transportation Commission for consideration for inclusion on the STIP. There will need to be larger projects that the regional transportation planning program would not be able to handle in an efficient or expeditious way without outside support. The state is holding a public forum on April 10th and the survey is open until April 30th. Information about the forum, survey, 12-year plan, and statewide transportation improvement program is available on "talkPATransportation.com". LVPC staff will attend the public meeting as part of our metropolitan planning responsibilities.

Mr. Mosca added that the State Transportation Commission is still in the beginning of the process and encouraged the LVTS's participation in the process.

There were no additional questions or comments from the committees or members of the public.

LTAP Tech Assist & Training 5-year Report

Mr. Hite shared information about the last 5 years of the Local Technical Assistance Program. Educational Classes are what the LTAP was founded on, engaging best practices. 50 of 62 Lehigh Valley Municipalities have participated in LTAP class training from January 2020 to March 2025. While participation is largely municipal, engineers, planners and other professionals from associated or allied industries attend as well. All in all, 1,525 people have trained in "classroom" over the last five years. The education provided and the students attending various courses show the awareness of the value of LTAP

not only locally but from as far away as Chester County and the Scranton Area. In the five-year period of this report, the LTAP program offered a variety of options for education. In total there were 44 in-person classes held at the LVPC or at a municipality hosting a class. Additionally, virtual classes were extremely popular during the pandemic and now. The LVPC in collaboration with PennDOT provided 136 virtual classes. Through the LVPC's coordination and collaboration with PennDOT and Lehigh Valley communities, new classes were developed. These, while initiated locally, are now statewide and include "School Transportation Management", "Trucks on Local Roads" and "Introduction to Traffic Studies". LTAP also provides specialized one-on-one training through on-site "Tech Assists". LTAP's technical assistance provides customized guidance to municipalities on a host of transportation-related issues. Tech Assists provide recommendations or answer a question about the local transportation system. PennDOT's technical experts and LVPC staff help troubleshoot almost any local transportation maintenance or safety concern. Currently, this program is supported by the US Department of Transportation, PennDOT and LVPC, and is free of charge. Between January 2020 and March 2025, the Lehigh Valley LTAP Tech Assist program responded to 221 requests for assistance which trained or provided guidance to 43 municipalities. This is an annual average of 44 onsite technical assistance visits per year, the highest of any region in the Commonwealth. The future of the Lehigh Valley LTAP program is limitless in its potential as we build upon the success of the program over the past several years. With the excellent participation and level of on-site technical assistance required by and expected by the LVPC and our communities we are working with our LTAP Partner, PennDOT, to achieve a more strategic and targeted approach. This next level of technical assistance is currently, envisioned to coordinate local, regional and state transportation infrastructure needs. This comprehensive, collaborative approach to Tech Assists is intended to advance projects identified in the FutureLV: The Region Plan (Metropolitan Transportation Plan, WalkRollLV: Active Transportation Plan, Transportation Safety Plan, Congestion Management Process. A more targeted approach is also intended to support municipal and county governments with grant applications for state and federal funding outside for the regional Metropolitan Planning allocations and with local capital planning. As a growing region, transportation needs and improvements can be a challenge but collectively and collaboratively we can achieve more improvements, faster as a goal. Building upon the past success is essential, we will be providing information of where the LTAP program is and where we plan to evolve. Regular updates on virtual and in-person classes and Tech Assists are expected to be shared. Additionally, the Annual LTAP report will also be shared in the fourth quarter of 2025.

Mr. Molchany congratulated the LVPC on the success, and said the whole region benefits from these educational opportunities. He added Brian's efforts and noticeable and appreciated.

There were no additional questions or comments from the committees or members of the public.

Status Reports

Mr. Molchany said the status reports on PennDOT District 5 Highway Projects, the monthly Traffic Report and Public Engagement, Grants and Education were included in the meeting packet. There were no questions or comments from the committees or public.

Adjournment

Mr. Molchany stated that the next LVTS Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting is on April 16, 2025, at 9 AM. Mr. Stoudt made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned.