



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, October 15, 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
Basel Yandem (Alt.)	City of Bethlehem
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
James Mosca	PennDOT Central Office
Owen O'Neill	LANTA

Members Absent:

Technical Committee

Matthew Tuerk	City of Allentown
J. William Reynolds	City of Bethlehem
Salvatore Panto	City of Easton

Coordinating Committee

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

Staff Present: Matt Assad, Becky Bradley, Evan Gardi, Clay Karnis, Subham Kharel, Hannah Milagio

Public Present:

Craig Beavers, Brian Hare, Scott Harney, Jeff Rai, Meredith Hauck, Scott Slingerland, Toni Mitman, Brett Webber, Evan Jones, Jennifer Swann, Sherri Penchishen, Brian Miller, Rich Ames

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Molchany asked if there were comments for items not on the morning's agenda. Ms. Milagio noted that, due to the lack of a state budget, PennDOT's LTAP program is cutting back on in-person classes. The upcoming Municipal Stormwater Facilities Program class scheduled for October 28 at the LVPC Office has been rescheduled as a virtual class. Ms. Milagio stated that the LVPC will send out a communication to registered participants and update the listing on the website.

Ms. Bradley shared that the LVPC staff has started working on the LVTS meeting schedule for 2026. She asked for informal feedback from LVTS members as to whether members wanted to keep the existing meeting date and time, or if they would like to think about adjustments. The volume of business that the LVTS must attend to, and most LVTS meetings have been at least two hours long. Mr. Hopkins noted that the LVTS has operated with on this meeting schedule for several years, it seems to work for members, and he would rather not change it. Mr. Cotter and Mr. Yandem agreed, with the understanding that meeting times can and will be adjusted an hour earlier if a meeting will require up to three hours. Ms. Bradley thanked them for their feedback, and she asked LVTS members to share any additional feedback on the meeting schedule with herself and Ms. Milagio.

Mr. Webber stated that All Aboard Lehigh Valley is now a nonprofit organization, and that its newly formed board met on October 14. Their board would like to express support for LVPC's efforts for continued studies for a reestablishment of passenger rail in the Lehigh Valley, and they will continue to pursue advocacy to amend the state Rail Plan to include a corridor project in the region. Ms. Mitman echoed Mr. Webber's comments. Ms. Bradley noted that the LVTS has been trying since the beginning of 2025 to get a representative from the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) to speak at an upcoming meeting, but there have been significant staffing reductions at the FRA. She is hopeful that an FRA representative would be available before the new year, but that nothing had been solidified or scheduled at this point. Mr. Webber thanked Ms. Bradley and expressed that All Aboard Lehigh Valley wanted to provide constituent support to impact political funding decisions of a potential service.

Mr. Molchany noted that the LVTS, not the LVPC, is the entity responsible for decision-making with respect to a potential passenger rail service in the region. He stated that there is not currently the political appetite for passenger rail project funding, and that there may be significant resistance unless there is buy-in from another regional partner, such as SEPTA or NJTransit. He noted that economic development and impact for federal, state and regional partners would need to be considered, with particular attention paid to funding the effort beyond the next step. Mr. Molchany expressed disappointment that the FRA has not been able to present to the LVTS yet. He stated that the LVTS is motivated to move forward, but needs to proceed with caution since there has been no word from the FRA.

Mr. Webber stated that All Aboard Lehigh Valley is looking to share specific economic development data, and that their partners will help provide data in a way that would augment data in any subsequent study. All Aboard Lehigh Valley met with the FRA in the spring, and Mr. Webber believes the region needs a champion for passenger rail. Ms. Mitman suggested that the LVTS reach out to Governor Shapiro, as state level officials should be included in discussions of passenger rail, given the commonwealth's history of rail. Mr. Molchany thanked Mr. Webber and Ms. Mitman for their comments. There were no additional comments for items not included on the meeting agenda.

Minutes

Mr. Cotter stated that the last Technical Committee monthly meeting was held on September 17, 2025. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on:

- Minutes from the July 16, 2025, Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting
- LANTA Performance Measures

- Roadway Functional Classification System Update
- Adjournment

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the September 17, 2025 minutes. Mr. Hopkins made the motion, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Raio. 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 last Coordinating Committee monthly meeting was held on September 17, 2025. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on:

- Minutes from the July 16, 2025, Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting
- LANTA Performance Measures
- Roadway Functional Classification System Update
- Adjournment

Mr. Molchany asked for a motion to approve the September 17, 2025 minutes. Mr. Mosca made the motion, seconded by Mr. O'Neil. 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.

Old Business

INFORMATION ITEM: 2025-2027 Unified Planning Work Program Updates/Active Projects Report

LVPC Strategic Plan

Mr. Molchany introduced Ms. Hauck as the representative of Everstrive Solutions, the firm that prepared the LVPC's Strategic Plan, and thanked LVTS members for being a part of the strategic plan process. Ms. Hauck set the context for the presentation, noting that the LVPC's Strategic Plan was an internal-facing document and that her presentation would be a high-level overview of the plan.

Ms. Hauck outlined the timeline of the strategic planning process, which included document review, peer research and interviews, stakeholder surveys, focus groups, and a strategic planning retreat. She noted five key findings of this research, that LVPC: is credible, is constrained, balances analysis and advocacy, needs brand identity, and should diversify. Ms. Hauck outlined the five strategic pillars, under which strategies would be documented to help LVPC achieve its goals: Trusted Partner, Elevated Brand, Clear Scope, Sustainable Funding, and Aligned Operations.

Ms. Hauck reviewed the goals under each pillar:

- Pillar: Trusted Partner
 - Position LVPC as the region's leading source of planning expertise.
 - Solidify LVPC's role as a convener on critical regional issues.
 - Create a consistent and accessible user experience across all partner interactions.
- Pillar: Elevated Brand
 - Build a clear and consistent organizational identity
 - Translate complex work into clear, accessible communications
 - Strengthen LVPC's presence as a recognized and trusted regional leader
- Pillar: Clear Scope
 - Prioritize core statutory responsibilities and resource them accordingly
 - Create a transparent decision-making framework for discretionary work
- Pillar: Sustainable Funding
 - Strengthen and stabilize public funding partnerships
 - Establish and budget for a nonprofit affiliate to expand access to philanthropic and collaborative grant funding
 - Implement a strategic fee-for-service model to support value-added work
- Pillar: Aligned Operations
 - Maintain, continue to build and support a high-performing team

- Improve internal systems and workflows to enhance productivity and reduce friction
- Build a knowledgeable, engaged board and committee structure to champion LVPC's mission

Mr. Molchany thanked Ms. Hauck for her presentation, and he commended the LVPC for taking on this strategic planning effort. He noted that this strategic plan highlights the value of LVPC and its contributions to the region. *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* is a critical document that helps LVPC provide regional land use perspectives, and he commended the LVPC for incorporating the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and bi-county comprehensive plan into this one regional plan. The LVPC also provides guidance and regulatory services on environmental issues, and the counties need to look to the LVPC for regional guidance on these issues. He noted that the LVPC is limited, but it continues to meet the challenges it is presented, and the strategic plan provides insight into the direction of the organization.

Mr. Molchany asked if there were additional comments from LVTS members, and there were none. Mr. Molchany asked if there were any questions from the public. Ms. Mitman stated that the LVPC should look to connect with Preserving PA, an organization that she helped to establish, as a potential nonprofit partner. She noted that the perception of the region is shifting away from farmland and rural communities, and residents are not happy about it. She stated that Northampton County has protected 21,000 acres of farmland, and we need to protect it. Mr. Molchany commended Northampton County for their 21,000 acres of preserved farmland, and he shared that Lehigh County has preserved more than 28,000 acres of farmland. LVPC supports both county farmland preservation programs, though farmland availability in the region is shrinking. The Lehigh Valley's population and economies are growing, and the LVPC must plan for the future. There were no additional questions from LVTS members or the public.

Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP): Data Updates, including Land Use, Congestion, Safety Population and Employment Projections Update

Dr. Kharel presented initial findings from employment trends observed in the Lehigh Valley, which were done in partnership with the Workforce Board Lehigh Valley. Employment in the region has grown steadily from approximately 178,500 jobs in 1970 to 324,248 jobs in 2022, increasing by 82% over those five decades. Lehigh County jobs increased from 102,010 to 208,767 during that time period, while Northampton County jobs grew from 76,490 to 115,481. Dr. Kharel displayed a map to show areas of high employment concentration, which was defined as contiguous census blocks with at least 500 jobs per five acres of land. He highlighted several Lehigh Valley job centers including the cities of Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton, and the Townships of Hanover (Northampton County), Upper Macungie and Whitehall. Dr. Kharel reviewed commuter movements into and out of the region in 2022, per data from the US Census Bureau. He noted that 12,878 workers commuted into the Lehigh Valley from other regions of Pennsylvania, while 13,699 Lehigh Valley residents traveled to jobs elsewhere in the commonwealth. He stated that 4,501 New Jersey residents traveled into the Lehigh Valley for work, and 1,421 Lehigh Valley residents traveled to New Jersey for work. He concluded by stating that 4,183 New York residents travel to the Lehigh Valley for work, and that 1,599 Lehigh Valley residents commute to New York.

Mr. Molchany asked for clarification on the commuter movements slide, and the narrative¹ was corrected. He asked if there were any questions from LVTS members or the public on the presentation thus far. Mr. Slingerland asked if the analysis considered people working from home. He also asked if traffic patterns have returned to pre-pandemic levels, and if there had been an examination of traffic patterns in the City of Bethlehem where Route 378 acts as a thru-way between Route 22 and Interstate 78. Ms. Bradley stated that this was an excellent segue into the next section of this presentation.

Ms. Bradley announced that the full Employment + Population Projections Analysis will be released at the Lehigh Valley Awards Gala. The Gala will honor impactful planning, design and community development across Lehigh and Northampton Counties. Ms. Bradley noted that the event will be held on Wednesday, December 3 at the Hotel Bethlehem, and that tickets are limited.

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

¹ These minutes reflect the narrative as intended for clarity.

Congestion Management Process (CMP) Update

Dr. Kharel stated that the CMP uses data from the Regional Integrated Transportation Information System (RITIS) to understand the causes of congestion in the region. The main delay sources for the Lehigh Valley are recurrent congestion, signal delays, and incidents, showing that congestion is the result of multiple, varying factors. He stated that the CMP is a federally required framework that requires MPOs to maintain a systematic, data-driven approach to monitoring and managing congestion. It is mandated by the Federal Highway Administration under 23 U.S.C. §134 and 23 CFR 450.322.

Dr. Kharel reviewed a chart that reflects the Federal Highway Administration's guidance for conducting the CMP. The planning stage of the process requires objective identification, data analysis and performance measure selection to define the CMP network. Once the network is defined, high-congestion corridors and bottlenecks are identified, and the LVTS Technical Committee formally reviews and scores the corridors and bottlenecks. Those prioritized through the scoring process will be incorporated into the project selection processes for the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) and the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He noted that staff are currently working on data collection and preliminary analysis, as well as developing an automated spreadsheet that will support the LVTS Technical Committee's criteria and ranking process during their meeting on November 19. Dr. Kharel stated that the CMP is scheduled to be completed by early 2026 to support the MTP update.

Mr. Molchany stated that the CMP will be an extremely important tool as the LVTS continues to work on transportation issues and make decisions. He asked if there were any questions from LVTS members and the public, and there were none.

Lehigh County Industrial Land Use Guide

Mr. Gardi stated that the LVPC staff are developing the Lehigh County Industrial Land Use Guide, which will help communities address existing industrial impacts and plan for new and emerging industrial land uses. He noted that that same evening, October 15, the staff would host a municipal Land Use Workshop to gain further insight from Lehigh County communities. The Guide is planned to be adopted by the end of 2025, and deliverables will include the publication of the guide, resource tools for local governments, and local government training/technical assistance.

Mr. Molchany noted that Northampton County completed a similar guide and that, with the completion of the Lehigh County guide, the region would have a complete guide for industrial land uses. Ms. Bradley confirmed that the Northampton County guide was completed in 2023, and it addressed the mega warehouses that were being proposed in the county at that time. The Lehigh County guide addresses the dynamic industrial land uses that are being proposed now, as well as those that will likely be proposed in the future. Mr. Molchany asked if there were any questions from LVTS members or the public, and there were none.

US Route 22 Plan

Ms. Bradley stated that five responses were received for the Route 22 Plan Request for Proposal (RFP) from the following firms: Alfred Benesch Company, Michael Baker International, OJB Landscape Architecture, Pennoni Associates Inc and WSP USA. The RFPs will be reviewed by a committee that includes representatives of PennDOT, the LVPC, and the counties' alternates on the LVTS. Potential consultants would be notified of the opportunity to interview on October 24, with interviews taking place from October 30 – November 3, with the anticipated notice of award occurring November 7-14. The contract is anticipated to begin in December 2025, but this is dependent on the end of the federal government shutdown and a resolution to the state budget.

Mr. Molchany asked Ms. Bradley to explain how the US Route 22 Plan will be funded. Ms. Bradley noted that the LVTS was getting a lot of requests to improve US Route 22. The adopted Route 22 Tomorrow study is outdated and lacked a strategy that meets current needs. Senator Nick Miller picked up on this need, and he forwarded it to PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll. LVTS advocacy helped to secure this funding. Mr. Molchany noted that planning work often has long time cycles, from securing the funding to writing and implementing the plan. The work of the LVPC on these efforts is critical.

Mr. Molchany asked if there any questions from LVTS Members. Mr. Mosca confirmed Ms. Bradley's statements and that the funding secured is 100% from federal and state sources. He noted that he is looking forward to reviewing the RFP responses. Mr. Molchany asked if there were any additional questions from LVTS members or the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Ms. Bradley noted that financial guidance, issued by PennDOT in partnership with USDOT and Planning Partners, includes funding buckets for highway, bridge and transit projects. Each bucket has its own regulations and can only be expended in federal fiscal year when it is anticipated to be received. Financial Guidance for the LVTS has allocated \$349,338,000 for highway and bridge projects and \$193,152,767 for transit projects, for a total regional investment of \$542,490,767 over the four-year period. This does not include any discretionary funds that may be received during the TIP cycle.

Ms. Bradley reviewed the 2027-2030 TIP schedule, noting that the LVTS is on track to adopt a draft project list by the December 17 Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting. She stated that the LVPC staff have been working with PennDOT and LANTA to develop a list of carryover projects, as well as data updates and compiling federal and state funding criteria. These criteria will be ready for the LVTS Technical Committee Workshop on October 22 so the committee can finalize selection criteria. Staff will analyze the finalized criteria against the projects from *FutureLV: The Regional Plan* for discussion at the Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee workshop on November 5.

Ms. Bradley noted that the upcoming workshops for the TIP development would be held virtually because of the federal government shutdown and travel restrictions for state employees, and that this format change was advertised. Mr. Molchany stated that advocacy from the LVTS helped to get the regional allocation to \$550 million. It will also not cover the needs of the region, and the decisions made at the workshops will be critical because of limited funds. He noted that the TIP is the most important part of the MTP because it is where the funding is allocated to the projects listed in the MTP, which can be viewed at www.lvpc.org.

Mr. Molchany asked if there were any questions from LVTS members or the public. Mr. Harney asked in the meeting chat: "When is the next time that you will be accepting requests from municipalities for projects to be added to the list of candidate projects?" Ms. Bradley answered that the next MTP update will an open call for projects, likely taking place in Spring 2026. She noted that communities have a chance to make new requests for projects on a four-year cycle.

Mr. Molchany reiterated that the TIP is how funding comes into the region to address transportation infrastructure needs, and that project requests should be thoughtfully assembled to be added to the MTP and subsequently the TIP. Ms. Bradley noted that the staff prequalify projects through the MTP update process, and any project who makes it in the MTP, including the Unmet Needs section, is eligible for federal funding. This prequalification can also help municipal partners seek additional funding outside of the regional TIP.

Mr. Molchany stated that the takeaway from this presentation is that the updates to the TIP and MTP are extremely important, especially because the TIP is actual monies spent in the region. The MTP update includes a long list of projects, including many that are classified as "Unmet Needs" because the financially constrained budget cannot cover all regional needs. He noted that, while it may be frustrating for a project to be on the Unmet Needs list instead of the fiscally constrained project list, it does help the chances of the project being eventually funded. He asked if there were any additional questions from LVTS members or the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: 2025-2028 TIP Administrative Actions

Ms. Ruth noted that, from September 6 to October 3, there were 2 administrative actions.

- Administrative Action #1: Lehigh Street Betterment, Lehigh County
- Administrative Action #2: August Redistributions
 - Cementon Bridge, Lehigh County

- Farmersville Road, Northampton County
- Route 248 Realignment, Northampton County
- Route 309 + Tilghman Street Interchange, Lehigh County

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

INFORMATION ITEM: Update on Transportation Funding + PA Budget

Ms. Bradley stated that the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania has not had a budget for 106 days, and the federal government has not had a budget for 15 days. She noted that all the member organizations of the LVTS are affected by the lack of state and federal budgets. The LVPC has reached out to legislative partners and is hopeful to have some kind of resolution within the next few weeks. The LVPC will continue to advocate for more sustainable funding solutions, and it has a strong reserve policy to weather these kinds of events. This situation cannot continue, but there will continue to be budget issues because of the political climate.

Mr. O'Neil noted that LANTA submitted a request to PennDOT on September 15 for flexing of capital dollars to LANTA over a two-year period. He received a confirmation letter from PennDOT that the request was received, and the letter stated that PennDOT hoped to make a determination in the near future. LANTA's current fiscal year is a projected deficit, so the organization is being very careful with funding to cover costs. Mr. O'Neil noted that the systems LANTA uses for invoice submissions and payments is still running. However, the longer the state goes on without a budget, the more likely it is that nonessential employees will be furloughed and unable to process these requests. LANTA is also transitioning to a new grant, which requires processing, and Mr. O'Neil expressed concern that this may be impacted by the budget situation.

Mr. Molchany noted that local and county governments have learned from previous budget impasses, and most have been able to establish stabilization funds. It is recommended that entities have 2-3 months of reserves on hand, but that does not account for simultaneous federal and state budget pauses. The LVTS and its members will continue to make cases to support local legislators to get the state budget approved because it is undoubtedly a huge concern for all local government entities. He stated that, ten years ago, Pennsylvania went 250 days without a state budget.

Ms. Bradley thanked Mr. Molchany for this perspective, and she explained that this is why the LVPC established a robust rainy-day fund. The LVPC is not eligible for the state borrowing program because it is not a taxing entity. She noted that these shutdowns are hurting MPOs across the commonwealth and country, as deadlines are not being moved and the expectations of the speed and quality of work remains the same. Ms. Bradley stated that it is unacceptable that the federal and state governments do not have budgets. Mr. Molchany added that budgets are extremely important, and that payments will be made up to all parties. It is an extremely challenging situation that highlights the need for the strategic plan and rainy-day fund planning.

Mr. Molchany asked if there were any questions from LVTS members. Mr. Mosca stated that PennDOT recognizes the challenges that MPOs and RPOs are facing. He noted that there is currently no contract authority on the state or federal side. Federal Fiscal Year (FFY) 2026 funding for planning and construction cannot be obligated. PennDOT can pay invoices for work done on or before June 30, and July 1 and beyond invoices can be accepted but are not being paid. He voiced PennDOT's support for the LVTS and its member organizations, and expressed hope that the situations would resolve soon. Mr. Molchany asked if there were more questions from LVTS members or the public, and there were none.

New Business

INFORMATION ITEM: PennDOT Truck Parking Focus

Mr. Mosca stated that PennDOT recognizes that truck parking is a nationwide issue, and it is committed to addressing the issue with short term measures and long-term solutions. Many partners are involved in this work, including the PA State Police, the PA Turnpike, and local partners. PennDOT Secretary Mike Carroll is currently holding press conferences to announce that 133 truck parking spaces will be added to

commonwealth-owned facilities by the end of 2026. Each location will have truck parking signs, and the addition of other basic amenities are still to be determined. He noted that there are two types of locations: facilities that are not immediately next to active roadway lanes, and facilities that are along interstate on-ramps that have no sight or entrance concerns.

Mr. Mosca noted that Secretary Carroll will hold several press conferences around the commonwealth, including one that was held on October 9 at the Park and Ride at William Penn Highway and State Route 33 in Northampton County. He stated that public truck parking information will also be included on PA511, including truck parking options and bridge height/weight restrictions. Long-term solutions for truck parking issues will build on local and statewide studies, including one issued by the Pennsylvania State Transportation Advisory Committee in 2023. He also stated that the truck parking task force is active within the freight working group.

Mr. Molchany stated that truck parking is extremely important for roadway safety and air quality in the region, and that this initiative will be important to the Lehigh Valley. Mr. Molchany asked if there were any questions from LVTS members or the public. Ms. Mitman asked if truck drivers are required to turn off their engines at William Penn Highway, as there is a school and several residential developments close to the site. Mr. Mosca stated that he would need to check that offline and get an answer for Ms. Mitman. Mr. Slingerland wrote in the chat that “PA has a no idling law for trucks, with exceptions.

<https://www.pa.gov/agencies/dep/programs-and-services/air/bureau-of-air-quality/automobiles/diesel-idling-and-act-124>”

Status Reports

Mr. Molchany said the status reports on PennDOT District 5 Highway Projects and the Public Engagement, Grants and Education memo 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 meeting would be a Technical Committee Workshop on October 22 at 8 AM. This would be followed by a Joint Technical + Coordinating Committee Workshop on November 5 at 8 AM. The next regular LVTS meeting would be a Technical Committee meeting on November 19 at 9 AM. All workshops and meetings would be held virtually. Mr. Kufro made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned.