



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, November 19, 2025 Technical 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. Brendan Cotter chaired the meeting.

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

Roll Call

Ms. Milagio took Roll Call.

Attendees:

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

Members Absent:

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

Staff Present: Hannah Milagio, Subham Kharel, Minsoo Park, Clay Karnis, Evan Gardi, Matt Assad, Jeanette Torrales

Public Present: Toni Mitman, Brian Miller, Tim Phillips, Lawrence Peterson, Brett Webber, Scott Harney, Jeff Rai, Tim Phillips, Rich Ames, Scott Slingerland, Scott Vottero, Gene Porochniak, Heather Heeter, Evan Jones

Courtesy of the Floor

Mr. Cotter asked if there were comments for items not on the morning's agenda. Ms. Bradley stated that she has remained in contact with the Federal Rail Administration (FRA) on the issue of a presentation to the LVTS regarding the next steps in a potential passenger rail project in the region. At this time, there is a presentation targeted for January 21, 2026, which is reliant on FRA staffing availability. Mr. Cotter thanked her for her coordination efforts.

Mr. Slingerland expressed gratitude for PennDOT's Local Technical Assistance Program (LTAP) that assisted elementary schools in the cities of Bethlehem and Allentown with multimodal concerns. He noted that most schools are not built for individual cars, and that drivers should be especially careful when driving around schools.

Ms. Torrales introduced herself as the new Executive Administrative Assistant on the LVPC staff. Mr. Cotter welcomed her to the LVTS.

Ms. Bradley reminded meeting participants that tickets are still available for the Lehigh Valley Awards Gala, which will be held on December 3 at the Hotel Bethlehem. She also thanked the event's sponsors.

Minutes

Mr. Cotter stated that the last Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee monthly meeting was held on October 15, 2025. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on:

- Minutes from the September 17th, 2025, Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting
- Adjournment

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the October 15, 2025 minutes. Mr. Hopkins made the motion, and the motion was seconded by Mr. Petrik. 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. Cotter stated that the Technical Committee held a workshop on October 22, 2025. Ms. Milagio noted the actions voted on:

- 2027-2030 Transportation Improvement Program Project Selection Criteria
- Adjournment

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to approve the October 22, 2025 minutes. Mr. Raio made the motion, seconded by Mr. Yandem. Mr. Cotter asked if there were any questions or comments from the members and the public. Hearing none, Mr. Cotter asked Ms. Bradley to call for a vote and the motion was approved.

Old Business

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

Ms. Bradley noted that there had been meetings with the LVPC and PennDOT, and she asked Ms. Ruth to explain why the highway and bridge line item was essential to the TIP. Ms. Ruth stated that the draft TIP starts with carryover projects from the current TIP, with update estimates and schedules of the projects carefully considered. Three large projects remain on the TIP in the next cycle: Route 309 at Tilghman Street, Route 309 at Center Valley, and the Hill-to-Hill Bridge. Potential increases for these and other projects could have significant impact to the 2027-2030 TIP. Line items on the TIP are intended to cover unforeseen project cost increases, and they are generally the recipient of funding that is left unallocated to a project. If every dollar allocated to the region is assigned to a project, there will be no line items that can cover unexpected costs. Without a line item to cover unexpected cost increases, money would need to be removed from other projects, prolonging projects and creating a backlog.

Ms. Ruth stated that there is limited Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP) funding available to assign to new projects. She noted that one of the other MPOs that she works with has very large projects that require funds to be reallocated from other projects, which delays those projects and creates a logjam. Ms. Bradley added that the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the federal surface transportation legislation that authorizes the funding, will expire at the end of Federal Fiscal Year 2026, and that the future of the regional allocation of transportation infrastructure funding beyond that year is still uncertain.

Ms. Bradley thanked Mr. Cotter for helping to address some questions on the transit TIP, and Ms. Ruth for her informal update and explanation of the line items.

Ms. Bradley stated that the LVTS hosted two public workshops on the TIP. The first was held on October 22 for the Technical Committee to determine the project selection criteria, which was included in the meeting packet. The second was held on November 5 for the Technical and Coordinating Committees to discuss the initial analysis of the project list from *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. The third workshop will be held on December 5 to review the final analysis of selected projects. Once the projects are selected, the

draft list will be finalized and brought to the LVTS Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee meeting on December 17.

Mr. Cotter asked if there were any questions from LVTS members. Mr. Hopkins asked Ms. Bradley what the process is or will be for reprioritizing projects after they have been submitted. Ms. Bradley stated that the open call for projects will happen with the update to the Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) next year. This current TIP project selection process has developed database prioritization tools that meet federal standards, and new projects came to the top. This system is testable, and the LVTS is in a better position to reprioritize as a lot has changed since the last update to the MTP in 2023. In previous TIP cycles, the LVTS was aware that some of these projects would be so large that funding for other projects would be limited. The "What to Do with 22" Study will also help the LVTS determine priorities moving forward. It will be challenging to combine an open call for projects with new surface transportation legislation, but the new tools developed through this process will make it easier.

Mr. Hopkins asked if, given the financial constraints of the regional allocation, the LVTS would consider a matching requirement. He stated that if something is truly important to a municipality, then it would find funds to provide a match. Ms. Bradley said that could be considered. The LVTS is one of the few MPOs in the country that does not ask for a match, and that most fast-growing regions require a match. Even a small match requirement would show that a municipality is committed to a project. She added that further questions, including whether a municipal governing body has made any official action in support of the project, should be asked in the next open call for projects. Ms. Bradley suggested that this be a discussion held with the Technical Committee during the first Technical Committee meeting of 2026.

Mr. Petrik asked if the LVTS should formalize a policy on how much of the regional allocation should be set aside for line items in future TIPs. He also asked if there was a way to quantify what the LVTS is willing to accept as the risk. Ms. Bradley noted this could be a good way to address the potentially political aspect of this work, which would provide flexibility for PennDOT. There would need to be follow-up with PennDOT, and a potential policy should be in place for the MTP update. Mr. Cotter asked if other MPOs or PennDOT Districts have similar policies. Ms. Ruth noted that she was not aware of any similar policies within PennDOT Districts, but that the Interstate Program did. Ms. Bradley and Ms. Ruth agreed to check with other MPOs, PennDOT Districts, and the Interstate Program.

Mr. Petrik asked if spike funds overlap with line items. Ms. Bradley answered that spike funds are discretionary from the PennDOT Secretary. Mr. Cotter asked for confirmation that, if a programmed project received spike funds, the programmed funds would be reallocated. Ms. Ruth confirmed that this was true for certain types of spike funding, but others functioned in different ways. Mr. Petrik noted that a policy for line items could help the LVTS avoid reliance on spike funds and maximize its resources. Mr. Cotter asked if there were any more questions from LVTS members or the public, and there were none.

INFORMATION ITEM: 2025-2028 TIP Administrative Actions

Ms. Ruth noted that, from October 4 to November 7, there were 9 administrative actions and 2 interstate administrative action.

- Administrative Action #1: Main Street – 21st Street to Cherryville Road, Northampton County
- Administrative Action #2: Lehigh Race Street Intersection, Lehigh County
- Administrative Action #3: Hecktown Road Bridge over US 22, Northampton County
- Administrative Action #4: Donats Peak Road Bridge over Kistler Creek, Lehigh County
- Interstate Administrative Action #1: LVTS Interstate Truck and Safety Study, Lehigh County
- Interstate Administrative Action #2: District Wide Interstate Concrete Patching, Northampton County
- Administrative Action #5: Transportation Alternative Project Management, Lehigh County
- Administrative Action #6: State Route 512 over Brush Meadow Creek, Northampton County
- Administrative Action #7: State Route 309 Resurface, Lehigh County
- Administrative Action #8: Mauch Chunk Road Signal Upgrade, Lehigh County
- Administrative Action #9: Shimersville Hill Safety Improvements, Lehigh County

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

DISCUSSION/ACTION ITEM: Congestion Management Process (CMP) Project Selection Criteria

Dr. Kharel stated that the CMP is a federally required framework, mandated by the Federal Highway Administration under 23 U.S.C. §134 and 23 CFR 450.322. It requires MPOs to maintain a systematic, data-driven approach to monitoring and managing congestion. It allows MPOs to identify where congestion occurs, understand why it happens, and determine which solutions are most effective.

Dr. Kharel reviewed the steps to complete the CMP, which were provided through the Federal Highway Administration's *Congestion Management Process: A Guidebook*. He noted that staff collected data and developed preliminary analyses to identify congested corridors and bottlenecks. LVPC staff also designed an automated spreadsheet that, using hypothetical scoring scenarios, identifies which corridors and bottlenecks would be considered regional priorities.

Mr. Park reviewed the key components that must be scored to identify priority corridors and bottlenecks: Enhancing System Reliability and Mobility; Ensuring Cross-Border Mobility and Network Modernization; Supporting the Goals Identified in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*. Mr. Karnis explained that Enhancing Mobility and System Reliability, evaluates congestion using Performance Measure (PM) 3: Reliability Measures and Congestion Intensity Measures. Mr. Park noted that Ensuring Network Modernization and Cross-Border Mobility, evaluates freight congestion using three categories of performance measures: Truck Reliability Measures, Network Modernization Measures, and Truck Congestion Intensity Measures. Dr. Kharel stated that Advancing *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*: Environmental, Multimodal, Safety, and Infrastructure Resilience, evaluates corridors and bottlenecks using four categories of performance measures: Air Quality, Multimodal Accessibility, Safety, and Infrastructure Resilience.

Dr. Kharel requested that LVTS assign scores for each of the broad components. The LVPC staff will use the scores to identify the top 10 corridors and bottlenecks, which will be incorporated into the Congestion Management Plan to guide future improvements and investments in the region's transportation network. Mr. Cotter thanked the LVPC staff for their work on the CMP, and opened the floor for comments and questions from LVTS members and the public.

Mr. Webber asked if the recent air quality surveys, which did not include any monitoring in the City of Easton and Wilson Borough, had a connection to the LVPC. Ms. Bradley said that it did not, and that the LVPC has not been kept informed on the work of those surveys. Any future air quality work done with the LVPC and/or LVTS would need to meet federal standards. The LVPC is releasing its regional climate action plan, *Pathway to a Resilient Greater Lehigh Valley*, which recommends the establishment of a formal air quality monitoring program that ties to transportation funding.

Mr. Webber asked what modes would be included in the "freight centers" mentioned during the presentation. Ms. Bradley noted that this term includes all modes of freight. Mr. Webber stated that All Aboard Lehigh Valley promotes continued support for intermodal freight facilities, especially those that utilize rail.

Mr. Petrik asked for what the criteria for the CMP would be used. Dr. Kharel noted that the criteria would be used to identify and rank congested corridors and bottlenecks. Mr. Petrik asked how whether this criteria would be used to identify new projects or be applied to existing projects. Ms. Bradley stated that it would do both, especially since this CMP will include PMs. These PMs may identify locations that are not reported or included in the current MTP. Mr. Cotter asked if there was a stronger push with PM requirements, and Ms. Bradley confirmed that there was.

Mr. Petrik suggested that the first two components (Enhancing System Reliability and Mobility, Ensuring Cross-Border Mobility and Network Modernization) should receive 30 points each, and the last component (Supporting the Goals Identified in *FutureLV: The Regional Plan*) should receive 40 points. Mr. Yandem agreed with this breakdown, stating that this would then further breakdown the subcomponents evenly; those for the first two components receiving 15 points each, and those under the last component would receive 10 points each. Mr. Hopkins agreed with the breakdown, and he asked if it

would be possible to have these types of discussions in separate workshop meetings. Ms. Bradley noted that there typically are workshops held to have these discussions, but there have been several workshops recently and did not want to overcrowd members' schedules. Mr. Cotter asked if there were any additional questions from LVTS members or the public, and there were none.

Mr. Cotter asked for a motion to accept the CMP Criteria Scoring as established during the meeting. Mr. Yandem made a motion to accept the CMP Criteria Scoring as established, seconded by Mr. Petrik. Ms. Bradley called for the vote, and the motion carried.

New Business

DISCUSSION/ACTION: 2026 LVTS Meeting Schedule

Mr. Cotter noted that the proposed 2026 meeting schedule, which was included in the meeting packet, carries forward the same meeting pattern. The Technical Committee would meet every month on the third Wednesday of the month, except in October. The Coordinating Committee is scheduled to meet jointly with the Technical Committee in January, February, April, June, August, October and December. He asked if any LVTS members had any questions or concerns with the proposed schedule.

Mr. Hopkins asked if the committees would consider returning to a meeting schedule with separate meetings. The joint meetings run long and are full of information that can be difficult to process all at once. In person, separate meetings was a burden, especially for members who sit on both committees. Mr. Hopkins stated that he thought separate, virtual meetings would be more streamlined. Ms. Bradley noted that, if the committee wanted to discuss the possibility of separate meetings, then the discussion should also include the Coordinating Committee as their meeting times would be impacted. She also noted that having separate meetings the same week would be more effective for staffing purposes.

Mr. Cotter, Mr. Hopkins and Ms. Bradley discussed the benefits and challenges of previous LVTS meeting schedules in which the Technical and Coordinating Committees met separately. Ms. Bradley stated that she and Ms. Milagio would develop different schedule options for the committees' review at the December meeting. Ms. Ruth added that PennDOT staff also attend other MPO meetings, and that those schedules should be considered.

Mr. Cotter asked if there could be an option to meet in January if consensus is not achieved at the December meeting. Ms. Bradley noted that this could happen, but it would mean running an additional legal advertisement, which can be costly. She stated that the staff would include a memo in the packet to explain the different scheduling scenarios, and that she would connect with Mr. Molchany of the Coordinating Committee to get his perspective.

Mr. Cotter stated that he was open to discussion with the Coordinating Committee on the meeting schedule, but that the meetings should remain virtual as LVTS member and public attendance has remained strong since the switch to a virtual format. He made a motion to table the vote on the meeting schedule until a discussion could be had with the Coordinating Committee, seconded by Ms. Bradley. Mr. Cotter asked for questions from LVTS members and the public, and there were none. Ms. Bradley called for the vote, and the motion carried.

INFORMATION ITEM: 2026-2027 Technical and Coordinating Committee Nominations

Mr. Cotter stated that both committees have a Chair, a Vice Chair and a Secretary that serve a two-year term. LVTS officers may serve for two consecutive terms, and Mr. Cotter is nearing the end of his second term. He stated that being Chair provides an interesting perspective on LVTS business and understanding what needs to be accomplished. The Chair has opportunities to provide their perspective, but that Chair's main role is to listen and keep the meeting and dialogue moving. He noted that he has enjoyed his time as Chair, and it has provided a lot of opportunities and dialogue with staff. Ms. Bradley stated that the Vice Chair serves in place of the Chair as needed. She noted that the LVPC has always been the Secretary, but that is not mandated by the bylaws, and anyone could fill that role.

Mr. Hopkins noted that, in previous years, a PennDOT representative has served as Chair. This was effective because it meant that, if there was a concern with a project, you could call the Chair, and they would introduce the project to the committee. Ms. Bradley noted that FHWA took issue with this method of business and wanted other members to be more active, so the LVTS adjusted its processes to meet federal standards.

Mr. Cotter noted that, because he is finishing his second term as Chair, a new candidate for Chair of the Technical Committee will need to be nominated. There were no further questions from LVTS members or the public.

Status Reports

INFORMATION ITEM: Highway Performance Monitoring System: Monthly Traffic Report

Mr. Karnis stated that report is a synopsis of traffic at active continuous counters in the region through the end of October:

- Route 309 near Coopersburg: 39,035 vehicles
- Route 22 in Palmer Township (between Route 33 and 25th Street exit): 53,402 vehicles
- Route 33 (just south of the Route 248 exit): 84,892 vehicles
- Route 22 (between Airport Road and Lehigh River bridge): 105,707 vehicles

Truck traffic counters in the region recorded the following:

- Route 33 (just south of the Route 248 exit): 10,470 trucks
- Route 22 in Palmer Township (between Route 33 and 25th Street exit): 2,566 trucks

Mr. Cotter said the Public Engagement, Grants and Education memo was included in the meeting packet. There were no questions or comments from the committees or public on the presentation or packet items.

Adjournment

Mr. Cotter stated that the next Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting would be a TIP workshop held on December 5 at 9 AM. He noted that the next monthly Joint Technical and Coordinating Committee Meeting would be held on December 17 at 9 AM. Mr. Raio made a motion to adjourn, and the meeting was adjourned.